

**BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT :  
A HISTORICAL SURVEY**

**A THESIS**  
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**PREFACE**

The Babbar Akali Movement forms a very important part of the history of the Panjab as well as of the Sikhs. It has, generally, been ignored upto now and has not received due attention and appreciation from historians and research scholars. Wherever an attempt has been made to take up this subject, the treatment is inadequate, inaccurate and perfunctory. Facts about its genesis, organisational set-up, working and impact are scantily known. Its aims and achievements have not been comprehended even by the close associates and contemporaries who were actively involved in it. The Babbars, in their own memoirs, seem to have over-emphasised the role of one or the other participant. At best, their approach has been subjective and they have succeeded only in throwing lime-light on that part and period of the movement which pertained mostly to their own locale and field of operation.

In this regard S. Gurbachan Singh's 'Babbar Akali', S. Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri's 'Babbar Akali Lehar', S. Labh Singh Jassowal's 'Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali' and Sikhan Dian Bemisal Qurbanian' (Bahaduri-i-Sikhan) (Mss.), S. Buta Singh's Babbar Akali Tehrik (Mss.) and S. Milkha Singh Nijjar's Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.) reveal to us the lop-sided views of the authors and the glaring contradictions and

inaccuracies in the narration of facts.

There is a lot of confusion about the name of the place where the Babbar Akali Jatha was launched. There is also no unanimity about the names of the office-bearers of the Jatha. Even the genesis of the movement is shrouded in contradictions.

The acquaintance of the scholars with the movement, too, lacks in-depth study. This may be due to the paucity of the material available to them since most of the literature, published during the third and fourth decades of this century, was proscribed by the then Government. No doubt, some attempts have already been made to appraise the Babbar Akali movement but no exclusive, thorough and first-hand study has been attempted so far. It has been touched upon either at a tangent or only one or the other of its aspects has been dilated upon.

Too much reliance on official records, too, has circumvented the utility of some of these works, because without referring to the literature in which the Babbars unfolded their mind and enunciated their objectives and means, no research, worth the name, could be conducted. Surprisingly enough, the research scholars have left the works of the contemporaries, mostly, untapped. One could not expect Dr. Mohinder Singh in 'The Akali Movement' or Dr. Kamlesh Mohan

in 'The Militant Nationalism in the Panjab (1919-1935)' to give a detailed account of the movement as it formed only a part of their study. But the glaring inaccuracies in the crucial dates, names and places pertaining to the movement have further marred the value of their works.

Dr. Mohinder Singh in 'The Akali Movement' maintains that the XIII Sikh Education Conference was held from March 19 to 21, 1921 at Hoshiarpur (p.114). The conference, however, actually took place from March 25 to 27, 1921. He also mentions that it was Karam Singh of Daulatpur who recited the poem, "Khanda Pakro Shero akhe Babbar Vangar" (p.117) at Mastuana, at the time of Nimani fair, in June 1921, whereas it was Kishan Singh Gargaaj who attended the fair and delivered a speech, bordering on militancy, advocating the use of force to liberate the Gurdwaras from the clutches of the Mahants.

Moreover, the place where the Babbar Jatha was launched, has not been correctly mentioned by both the scholars. Dr. Kamlesh Mohan in 'The Militant Nationalism in the Panjab, (1919 to 1935)', has not paid much attention to the correctness of the dates, persons and places. The dates mentioning the arrests of Master Mota Singh and of Kishan Singh Gargaaj are wrong. No date has been given as to when Bishan Singh, Zaildar of Rani Thua, was murdered.

The birth place of Bachan Singh has been shown in Jullundur District, whereas his native place Loha Khera is near Longowal, District Sangrur. (see map iii).

No doubt, this movement was confined to one part of the pre-Independence Panjab, its duration was short and it was crushed by the bureaucracy with an iron hand. Even then, the research scholars should not have failed to sift the grain from the chaff. Its role in the Gurdwara Reform Movement, surprisingly, has not been properly brought into limelight. The work of the movement in preparing grassroot-level workers for the Akali Dal as well as building a base for the Indian National Congress by the Chakarvartis and Babbar Akalis during their itineraries has not received proper attention. Significantly, the movement was the first of its kind during the recent period and was the true inheritor of the militancy that formed the core of the 18th century Sikh Movement. In the history of the Panjab its religio-political character marks it as a liberation movement. The nature of the movement, its role and impact have also not received the due consideration, which it legitimately demanded. Perhaps, all this happened as no serious effort was made to unearth and make use of the primary sources available in Panjabi language.

A sincere effort has been made, in this study, to bring to light facts concerning the Movement by unearthing the relevant material from the files of Panjabi Magazines, Journals and Newspapers pertaining to the Babbar Akali Movement,

which hitherto had remained almost unnoticed and untapped. The letters of Kishan Singh Gargaj and the poems of main leaders of the movement, shedding floodlight on the aims and ideology of the movement have been used critically and analytically for the first time. This source material has helped me to set right some of the wrongly held notions about its nature, aims and achievements. Its link with other contemporary and near-contemporary movements has also been discussed. I have tried to discuss afresh, the nature of its link with the Ghadr Movement as well as the Akali Movement. Its similarity with the Ghadr movement is very thin, whereas its dissimilarity with the Akali movement is very superficial. It was also quite different from the other militant movements in the sense that it derived inspiration from religion. The leaders of the Babbar Akali movement left their hearths and homes at a time when the Gurdwara Reform movement was passing through a crisis. Their patience was exhausted and they wielded the sword to settle their scores with the enemies of the Panth. The might of the British made them realise that the Gurdwaras could be liberated only if the country was liberated. So, they included the emancipation of the country among their objectives. This awareness changed the complexion of the Babbar Akali movement; it played a queer role in the history and provided a vitalising force to the Akali movement as well as the Indian National Movement. I have tried to bring all these factors into a proper perspective and have thus attempted to weave all strands afresh to make it an integrated account stating its origin



development as well as the circumstances of the fizzling out of the movement.

In the planning, preparation and completion of this work, I owe my deep gratitude to my Supervisor, Dr. Harnam Singh Shan, M.A., Ph.D. (London), Professor and Chairman, Department of Guru Nanak Sikh Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh. His vast knowledge, varied experience, profound learning and insight into Sikh History and literature etc, has always spurred and helped me to carry on the work with unabated<sup>or</sup> zeal. But for his consistent guidance and help, it would have been impossible for me to round off some of the angularities of the predecessors in the field and present this thesis from a modern, scientific, healthy and wholesome point of view.

My sincerest thanks are also due to Professor Hari Ram Gupta, a doyen among historians. His life-long devotion to the history of the Panjab as well as that of the Sikhs has enabled him to gain that exactness in the comprehension of the movements which is rare. His valuable suggestions have, therefore, enhanced the value of the thesis.

I am also thankful to Dr. Indu Banga, Professor of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; Dr. Devinder Singh Vidyarthi, Incharge Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar; S. Balbir Singh, Librarian, Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar and S. Kirpal Singh, Head, Guru Nanak Dev

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Mention must be made of Sardarni Pritam Kaur, Headmistress, Sikh Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, Ferozepur City to whom I owe a special debt of gratitude for placing the most valuable and rare record of Bhai Takhat Singh Library at my disposal (The entire record has been shifted permanently to the Panjabi University, Patiala, since 29th May, 1983).

Last but not least, I am deeply indebted to the living Babbars such as S. Buta Singh, S. Milkha Singh, S. Kartar Singh and S. Bakhshish Singh of Pindori Nijjaran; S. Hardit Singh



of Jassowal, S. Shiv Singh of Haripur and S. Surain Singh of Daulatpur for their frank and forthright replies to my queries enabling me thereby to know and assess the true character of the movement.

April 23, 1984.

*Gurcharan Singh*  
( Gurcharan Singh )

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5. S. Sunder Singh of Makhsuspur (Hoshiarpur).
6. S. Nand Singh of Ghurial (Jullundur).
7. S. Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur (Hoshiarpur).
8. S. Hardit Singh of Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).
9. S. Karam Singh of Haripur (Jullundur).
10. S. Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad (Hoshiarpur).
11. S. Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
12. S. Kartar Singh of Chak Kalan (Jullundur).
13. S. Kartar Singh of Jaspalon (Ludhiana).
14. S. Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
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[www.archive.org/details/namdhari](http://www.archive.org/details/namdhari)

BABBAR MARTYRS  
27 FEBRUARY 1926



S. KISHEN SINGH GARGAJ, S. DALIP SINGH,  
S. NAND SINGH, S. KARAM SINGH.  
BABU SANTA SINGH, S. DHARAM SINGH.

# BABBAR HEROES



MOTA SINGH



KISHAN SINGH



KARAM SINGH



SUNDER SINGH



NAND SINGH



DHANNA SINGH



HARDIT SINGH  
JASSOWAL



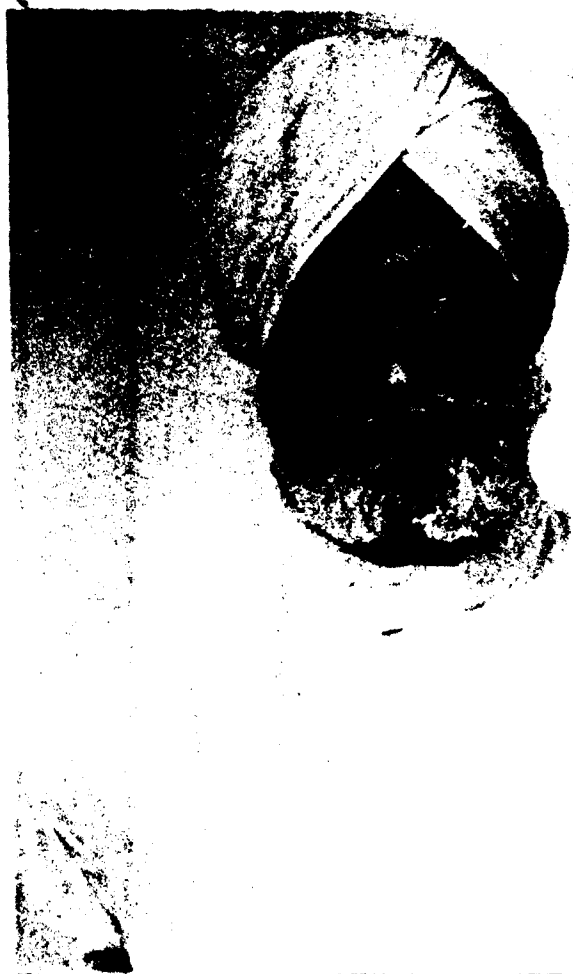
KARAM SINGH  
HARIPUR



HARBANS SINGH  
SIRHALA



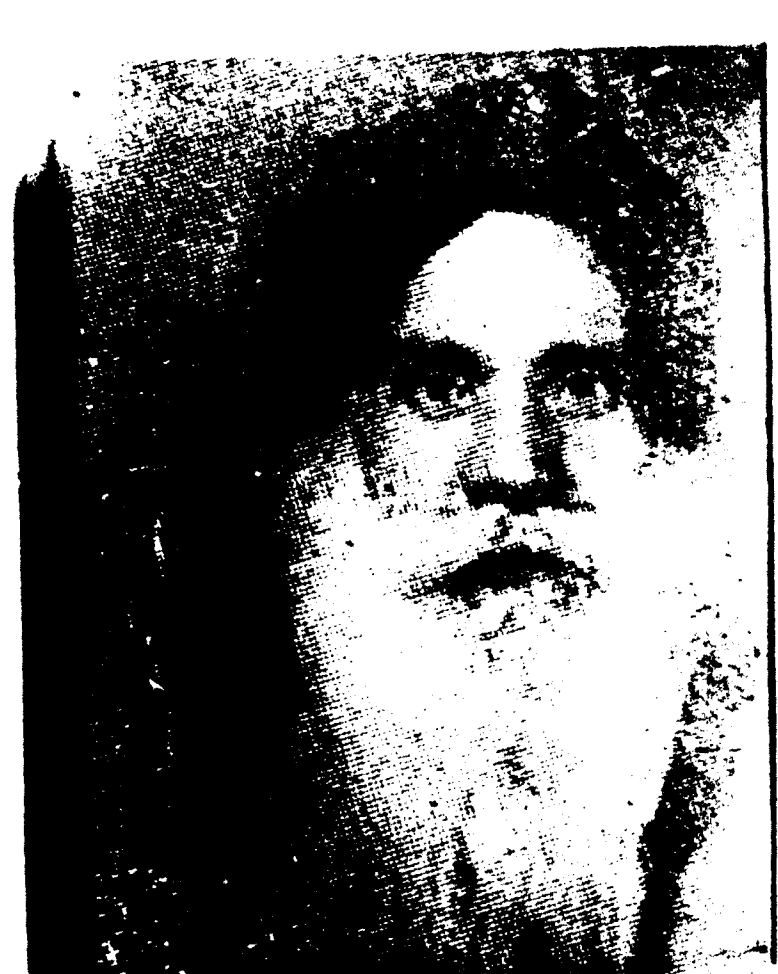
# BABBAR HEROES



BUTA SINGH



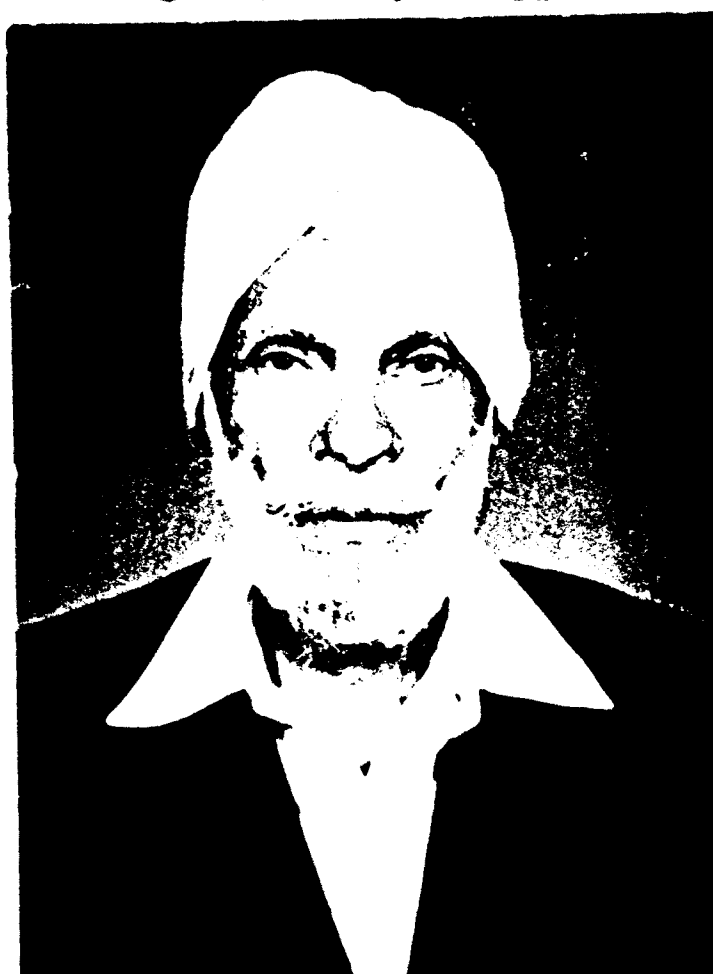
KARTAR SINGH  
CHAKKALAN



KARTAR SINGH  
JASPALON



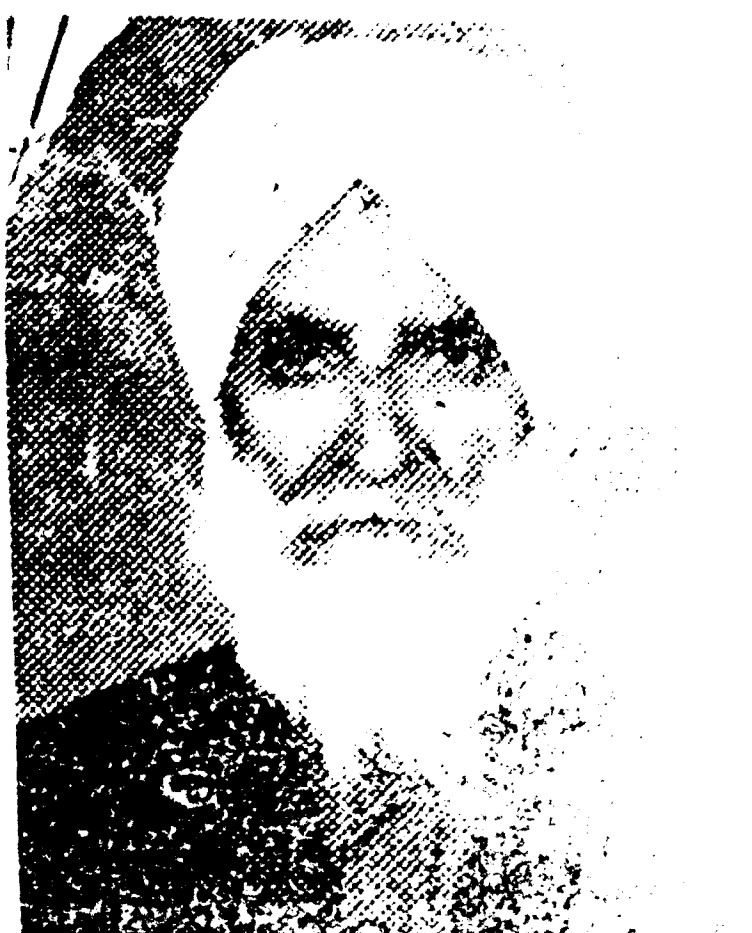
MILKHA SINGH



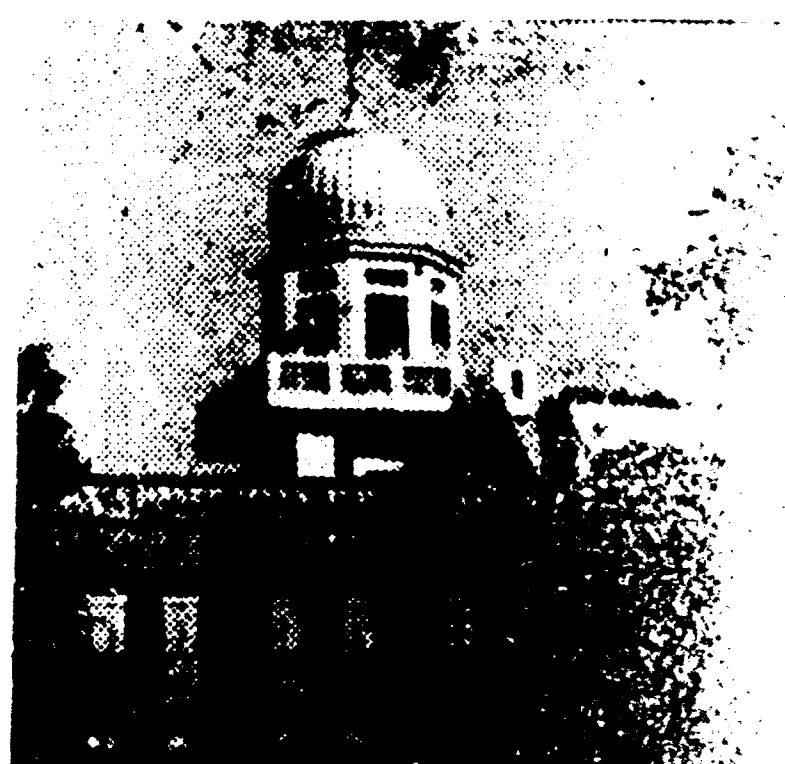
KARTAR SINGH  
PINDORI



SURAIN SINGH  
DAULATPUR



UJAGGAR SINGH  
PANNAHALI

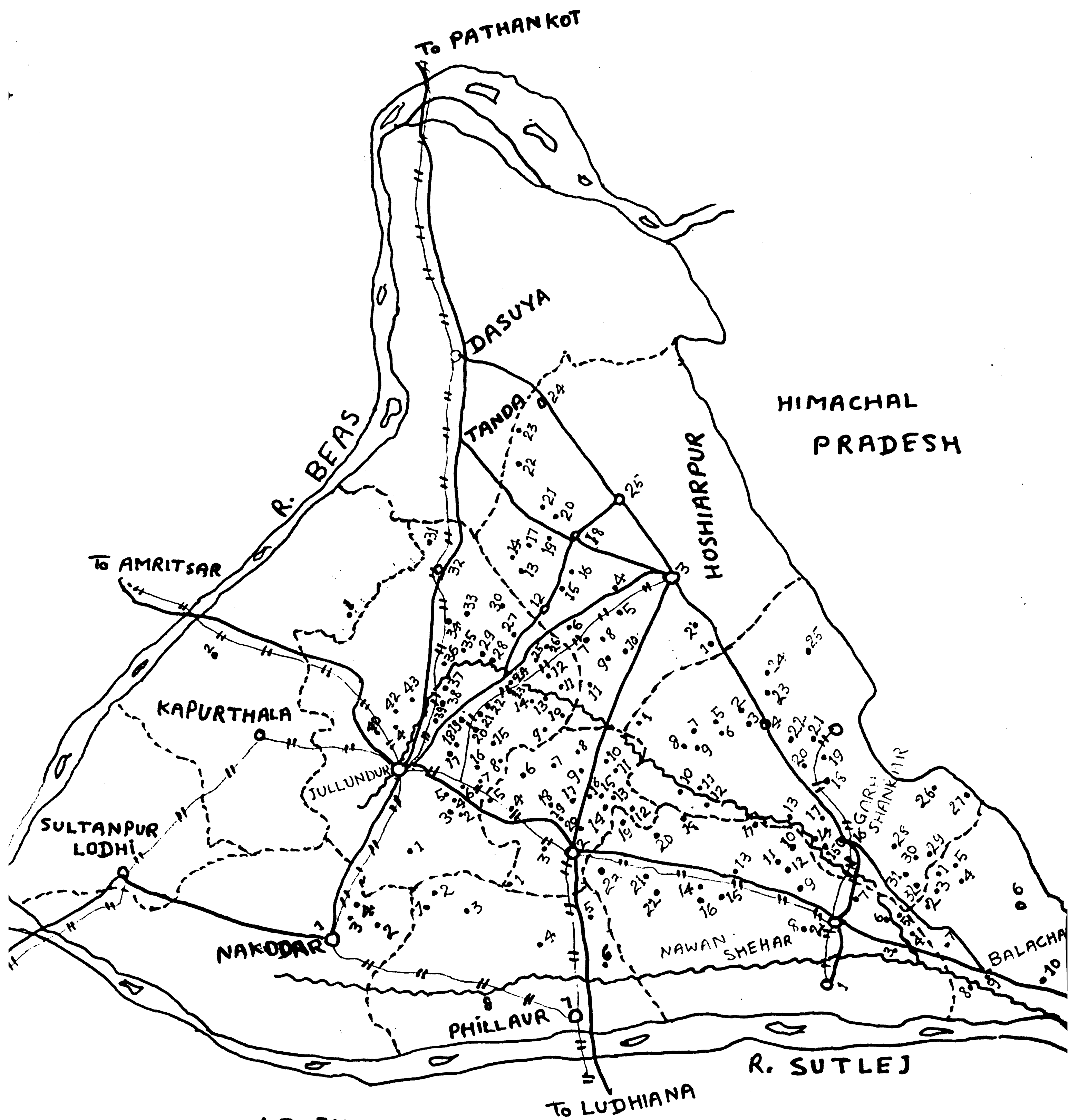


CHAUNTASAHIB  
BABELI



EMBLEM OF  
YUG PALTAU DAL

# BABBAR MOVEMENT DOABA



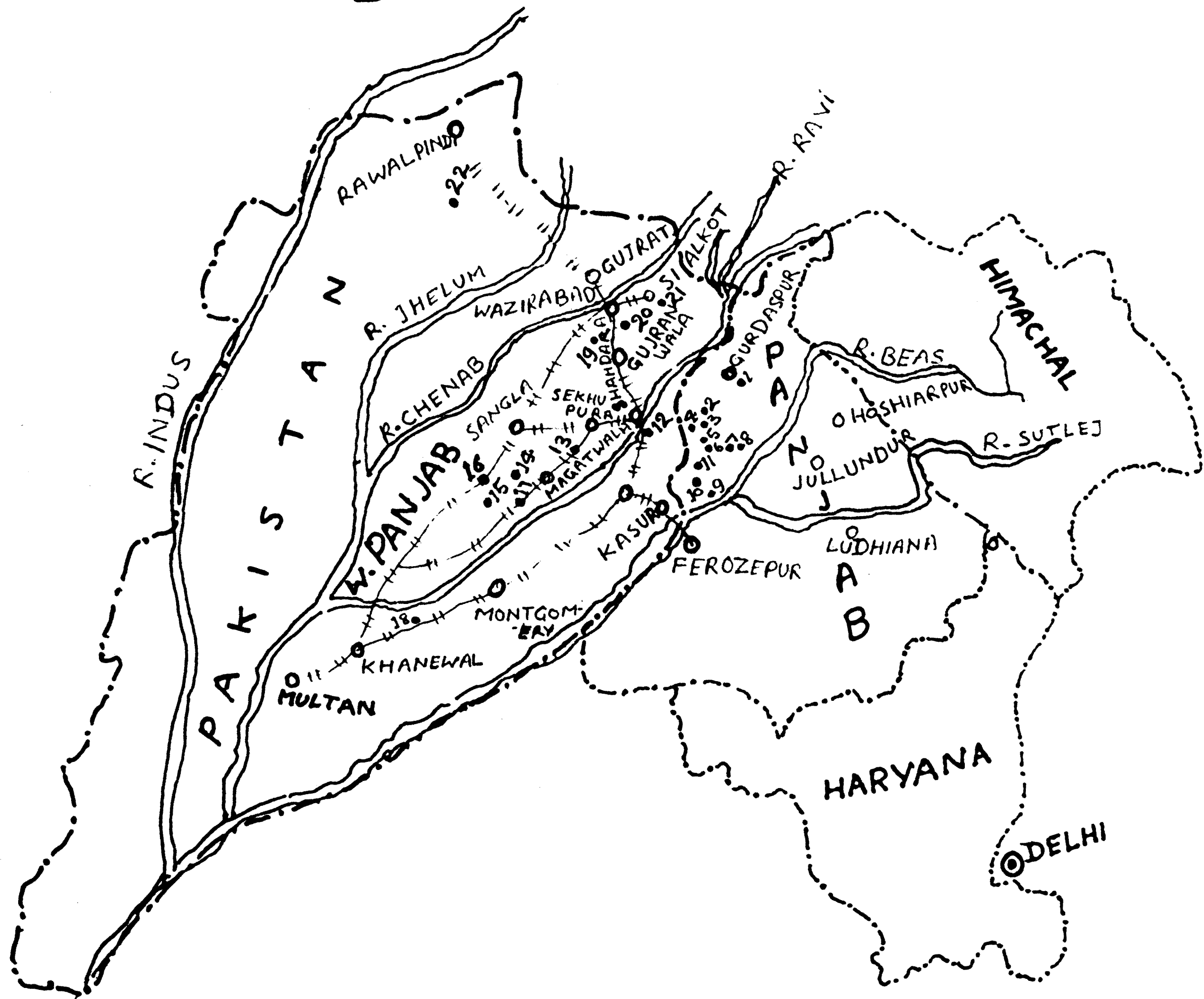
## LEGEND

PLACES CONNECTED WITH BABBAR MOVEMENT	•
RAILWAYS	—+—+—+—+—
RIVERS	~~~~~
ROADS	—————
CANALS	- - - - -

SCALE 1CM: 7 KMS



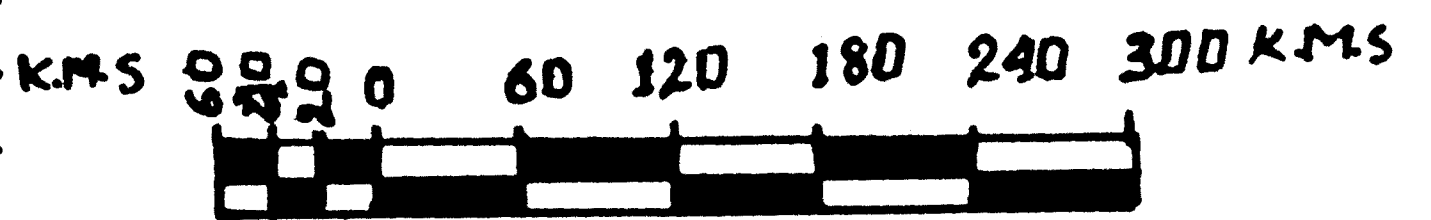
# BABBAR MOVEMENT IN CENTRAL WESTERN PANJAB



## LEGEND

PLACES CONNECTED WITH THE BABBAR MOVEMENT	•
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY	— · — · —
STATE BOUNDARY	- - - - -
RIVERS	~~~~~
RAILWAYS	+ + + + +

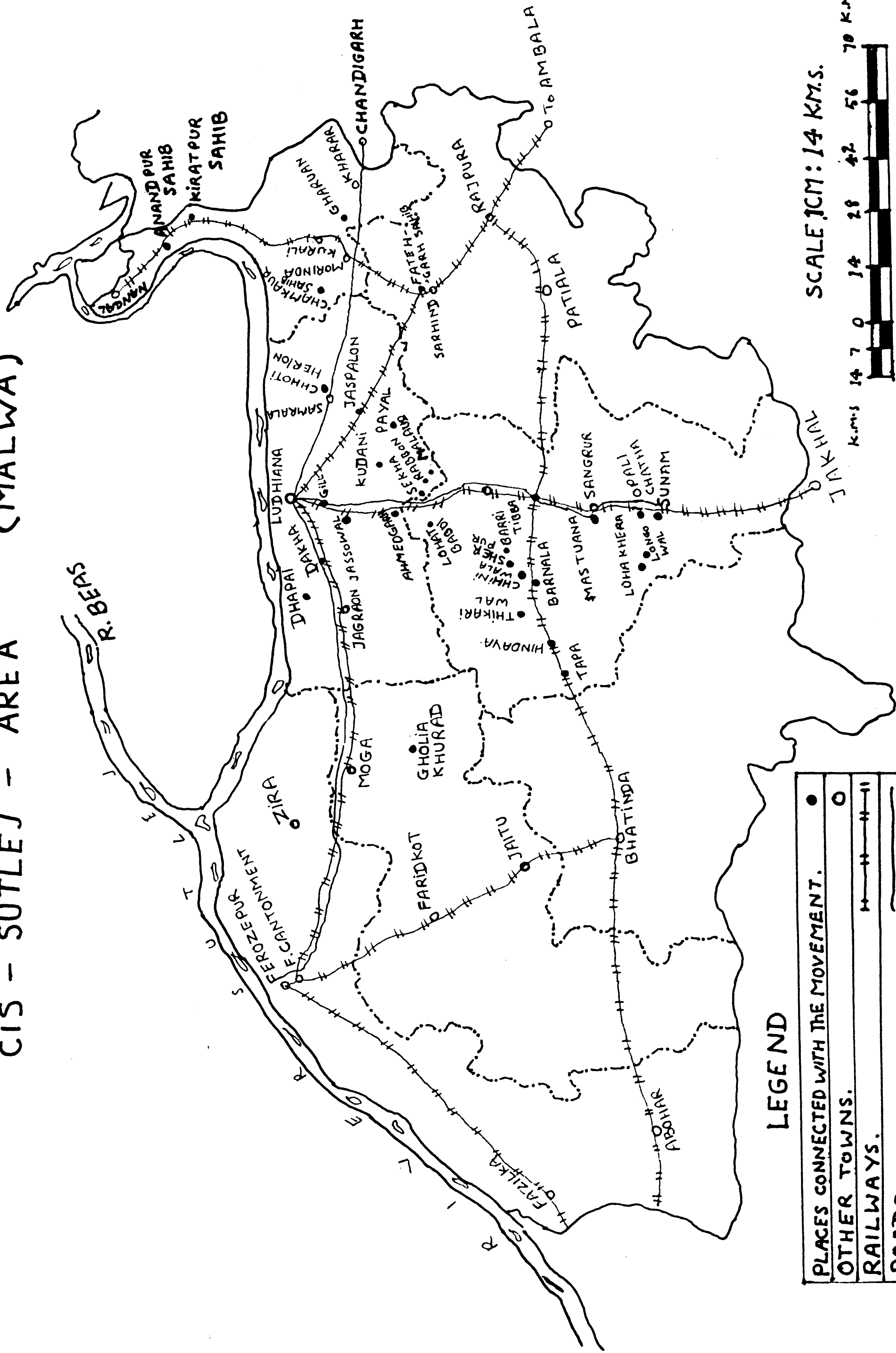
SCALE 1CM : 60 K.M.S.





# BABBAR ACTIVITIES

CIS - SUTLEJ - AREA (MALWA)



BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT

(Illustration of Map No. 1)

District HoshiarpurI. Tehsil Dasuya - - - -

II. Tehsil Hoshiarpur: (1) Zian (2) Chabbewal (3) Hoshiarpur  
 (4) Singriwala (5) Nasrula (6) Mundial (7) Rajowal (8) Rehsiwal  
 (9) Kahiri (10) Sahiri (11) Pindori Bibi (12) Sham Chaurasi  
 (13) Nanda Chaur (14) Dhamian (15) Pindori Mahtaman (16) Sherpur  
 Pukhta (17) Sandhara (18) Bulhowal (19) Dhadda Fateh Singh  
 (20) Pindori Mahal (21) Kotli Bawa Dass (22) Ambala (23) Dhugga  
 (24) Gardhiwala (25) Mariana.

III. Tehsil Garhshanker: (1) Baddon (2) Burro Barrian  
 (3) Gondpur (4) Mahalpur (5) Pindori Ganga Singh (6) Sirhala  
 Kalan (7) Sirhala Khurad (8) Dhada Kalan (9) Makhsuspur  
 (10) Mannanbana (11) Kot Fatuhi (12) Behbalour (13) Moranwali  
 (14) Akalgarh (15) Basiala (16) Garhshankar (17) Chela  
 (18) Shaila Khurad (19) Mehngarwal Doaba (20) Jassowal  
 (21) Dansiwal (22) Langeri (23) Fatehpur Kothi (24) Jandoli  
 (25) Bahowal (26) Achalpur (27) Khanpur Kulewal (28) Chak  
 Sangha (29) Samundra (30) Rurki Khas (31) Ramgarh Jhuggian  
 (32) Kukar Mazara.

District Jullundur:

I. Tehsil Jullundur:- (1) Jansar (2) Kukar Pind (3) Khusrapur  
 (4) Praggpur (5) Birring (6) Dhanowali (7) Talhan (8) Kotli Than  
 Singh (9) Mehdiapur (10) Gaurdial (11) Manko (12) Kandhola

(13) Dumunda (14) Haripur (15) Patara (16) Bisrampur  
 (17) Bhojowal (18) Nangal Shamran (19) Jauhal (20) Bolina  
 (21) Hazara (22) Jandu Singha (23) Adampur (24) Khuradpur  
 (25) Kuthar (26) Munder (27) Massanian (28) Pindori  
 Nijjara (29) Dingrian (30) Manak Rai (31) Sangaranuali  
 (32) Bhogpur Sirowal (33) Kishanpura (34) Kala Bakra  
 (35) Sangowal (36) Alawalpur (37) Daulatpur (38) Sikandarpur  
 (39) Dhogri (40) Suran-Nissi (41) Randhawa Masandan  
 (42) Raepur Hazulpur (43) Bal.

II. Tehsil Nakodar: (1) Nakodar (2) Sarinh (3) Shankar  
 (4) Chak Kalan.

III. Tehsil Phillaur: (1) Jandiala (2) Samranwan (3) Bundala  
 (4) Rurka Kalan (5) Piddi Khalsa (6) Apra (7) Phillaur  
 (8) Bilga.

IV. Tehsil Nawanshehar: (1) Rahon (2) Nawanshehar (3) Muzara  
 Kalan (Muzara Babbaran) (4) Jadia (5) Daulatpur (6) Phakrud  
 (Kishanpura) (7) Langroa (8) Hansron (9) Nahlon (10) Mahal  
 Gehla (11) Thandian (12) Bains (13) Banga (14) Gossal  
 (15) Khan Khannan (16) Jhingar (17) Gobindpur (18) Kangraur  
 (19) Mangat (20) Sundh (21) Lakhpur (22) Bika (23) Mandhali.

District Kapurthala (Erstwhile State)

I. Tehsil Sultanpur Lodhi - - - - -

II. Tehsil Kapurthala:- (1) Bopa Rai (2) Dhaliwal.

III. Tehsil Phagwara: (1) Maheru (2) Phagwara (3) Hardaspur

(4) Chaheru (5) Khajuraha (6) Buhani (7) Babeli (8) Domeli  
 (9) Bhubiana (10) Narur (11) Panshet (12) Manak (13) Sangatpur  
 (14) Lakhpur (15) Sahni (16) Dhandoli (17) Ranipur Thua  
 (18) Madhopur (19) Plahi (20) Bhulla Rai.

ii

Babbar Akali Movement in Central-western Punjab,

- 1 Lihai (Gurdaspur)
- 2 Amritsar
- 3 Chattrind
- 4 Gurusar Satlani
- 5 Tarnwaran
- 6 Bhuchar
- 7 Vein Bhoen
- 8 Alwal
- 9 Sahkhaon
- 10 Ratta Gadda
- 11 Lohke
- 12 Lahore
- 13 Nankana Sahib
- 14 Chak No 54 (Sialpur)
- 15 Chak No 96
- 16 Sialpur
- 17 Jaranwala
- 18 Mian Channu (Montgomery)
- 19 Goleindpur (Gujranwala)
- 20 Kot Barre Khan
- 21 Chahilpur (Sialkot)
- 22 Malakwal (Rawalpindi)

(111) LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.C.C.	All India Congress Committee
A.N.	Accused Number
B.A.C.C.	Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case
B.A.J.	Babbar Akali Jatha
B.T.S.L.	Bhai Takhat Singh Library, Ferozepur
C.I.D.	Criminal Intelligence Department
C.K.D.	Chief Khalsa Diwan
C and M.G.	Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore
C.P.C.	Criminal Procedure Code
C.S.L.	Central Sikh League
D.	Daily
D.B.P.S.C.	Desh Bhagat Parwar Sahaik Committee
D.B.Q.P.S.F.	Desh Bhagat Qaidi Parwar Sahaik Fund
D.B.Y.L.	Desh Bhagat Yadgar Library, Jullundur
D.C.	Demi-official
G.G.	Governor-General
G.N.D.U.	Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
G.R.M.	Gurdwara Reform Movement
H.E.	His Excellency
H.H.	His Highness
I.P.C.	Indian Penal Code
K.C.L.	Khalsa College Library, Amritsar.
L.A.D.	Legislative Assembly Debates.
N.A.I.	National Archives of India, Delhi

N.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi,
N.M.M.L.	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi
N.S.S.J.D.	Nirvair Sewak Saheed Jatha, Doaba
P.B.B.A.C.	Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy
P.P.	Public Prosecutor
P.F.A.	Punjab State Archives, Patiala
P.U.L.	Punjab University Library, Chandigarh
P.W.	Prosecution Witness
Q.I.M.	Quit India Movement
S.A.D.	Shiromani Akali Dal
S.B.	Sardar Bahadur
S.E.C.	Sikh Education Conference
S.G.A.	Sikh Gurdwara Act
S.G.P.C.	Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
S.H.R.D.	Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar
S.S.L.	Singh Sabha Lehar
S.F.L.	Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar
W.	Weekly

(iv) GLOSSARY

<b>Akali</b>	A member of the Akali or Nihang order of the Sikhs, literally means an immortal
<b>Akali Party</b>	A religio-political party of the Sikhs which came on the scene when the Gurdwara Reform Movement was started. Since then, it has dominated the Sikh affairs —religious as well as political.
<b>Akal Takhat</b>	Throne of the Immortal. In Sikh history it signifies the Sikh shrine at Amritsar, where decisions of temporal significance, concerning the Sikh community, are taken.
<b>Akhand Path</b>	Uninterrupted recitation of the Scriptures
<b>Akhbar</b>	Newspaper
<b>Amrit</b>	Nectar; the Holy water prepared with double-edged sword while Five Banis are being recited; also called ' <u>Khande ka Pahul</u> '
<b>Amritdhari</b>	A sikh baptised with the double-edged sword following the Sikh code of conduct
<b>Apil</b>	Appeal
<b>Ardasa</b>	A prayer in the form of a pledge, recited to accomplish a particular task
<b>Babbar</b>	Lion; as brave as a lion
<b>Babbar Akali</b>	An Akali capable of showing courage at the cost of his life; also a terrorist movement launched by a group of Akalis with its stronghold in the Doaba Bist Jullundur in 1921-22
<b>Bagawat</b>	Rebellion



<b>Bani</b>	<b>Sacred Scriptures</b>
<b>Bania</b>	<b>Trader</b>
<b>Bar</b>	<b>Arid soil. In the history of the Panjab the term was applied to the dry, uncultivated and virgin soil in the districts of Lyallpur, Jhang and Montgomery which turned out to be very fertile with the opening of the Bari Doab Canals.</b>
<b>Bhai</b>	<b>Literally a brother; also a title of respectability and sanctity among the Sikhs.</b>
<b>Bhora</b>	<b>An under-ground room or cave</b>
<b>Biradari</b>	<b>Brotherhood</b>
<b>Chakarvarti Jatha</b>	<b>A roving group</b>
<b>Chhand</b>	<b>A meter, a measure in poetry</b>
<b>Chubara</b>	<b>An attic, upper storey of a house</b>
<b>Dalil</b>	<b>Argument</b>
<b>Diwan</b>	<b>Religious congregation; also used as the name of Sikh associations</b>
<b>Doab</b>	<b>A territory lying between two rivers; particularly denoting the track of land between the Sutlej and the Beas, consisting of the districts of Kapurthala, Jullundur and Hoshiarpur.</b>
<b>Feringhee</b>	<b>Foreigner; in the text it refers to the British</b>
<b>Ghadar</b>	<b>Traitor</b>
<b>Ghadr</b>	<b>Revolt</b>
<b>Granthi</b>	<b>A reader of the Sikh scriptures</b>
<b>Gurbani</b>	<b>Word of the Guru, compiled in the Adi Granth of the Sikhs</b>
<b>Gurmata</b>	<b>A decision taken by the Sikh congregations after passing a resolution in the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.</b>



<b>Gurmukhi</b>	<b>Panjabi script</b>
<b>Guru Granth Sahib:</b>	<b>Sacred scripture of the Sikhs</b>
<b>Hartal</b>	<b>Strike</b>
<b>Haveli</b>	<b>Tenement or mansion; in the text it stands for a spacious place usually used as an animal enclosure</b>
<b>Holi</b>	<b>Festival of colours</b>
<b>Huqqa</b>	<b>Smoking pipe ,hubble bubble</b>
<b>Jatha</b>	<b>A group of the followers properly organised under the command of a leader</b>
<b>Jathedar</b>	<b>A group leader or president</b>
<b>Jholichuck</b>	<b>Toady; sycophant</b>
<b>Kala Paani</b>	<b>Deportation</b>
<b>Kandhi</b>	<b>Sub-montane region</b>
<b>Karah Parsad</b>	<b>Holy communion or the sacred sweetened food made of flour, ghee and sugar invariably distributed among the Sikh Sangat or assembly in the Sikh shrines</b>
<b>Kranti</b>	<b>Revolution</b>
<b>Keshas</b>	<b>Unshorn hair</b>
<b>Kutiya</b>	<b>Hut or hermitage; cottage</b>
<b>Lambardar</b>	<b>A village headman responsible for the collection of land revenue; also an assistant to the government officials, especially of the revenue and police departments</b>
<b>Lehar</b>	<b>Movement</b>
<b>Mahant</b>	<b>Priest or trustee of a religious shrine</b>
<b>Majha</b>	<b>Central Panjab, specifically the districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lahore and Gujjaranwala</b>
<b>Malwa</b>	<b>Land of the Maloia - southern Panjab</b>

<b>Manji Sahib</b>	A cot upon which Guru Granth Sahib is placed for recitation; it also signifies and denotes a pulpit or hall where the Sikhs assemble to discuss their socio-religio-political questions in the diwans in the proximity of the Golden Temple, Amritsar.
<b>Moreha</b>	Open confrontation with those in authority
<b>Nimani</b>	Popular Hindu festival which comes off in June every year
<b>Nit-Nem</b>	Daily recitation of the Scriptures obligatory for the Sikhs
<b>Pahul</b>	Baptism
<b>Panth</b>	The entire Sikh community
<b>Panth Rattan</b>	Jewel of the Sikh community
<b>Parkarna</b>	Precincts
<b>Patit</b>	Renegade
<b>Patwari</b>	A village accountant or a revenue official
<b>Premi</b>	Devotee
<b>Rehat Maryada</b>	Code of Conduct
<b>Sabhapati</b>	Chairman; President
<b>Sarope</b>	Robe of honour, conferred on an individual for the significant services towards the community as well as humanity
<b>Sahidi-Jor-Mela</b>	A diwan held in memory of the martyrs
<b>Sarbrah</b>	The manager or custodian
<b>Sewak</b>	Disciple
<b>Shabad</b>	A song from scriptures
<b>Sufed Posh</b>	A semi-official with bourgeois mentality in the rural areas, helping the government in administration; his job was honorary but he enjoyed many privileges during the British Rule

<b>Vakil</b>	<b>Counsel</b>
<b>Zaildar</b>	<b>A headman of a group of villages performing duties helpful to the government.</b>
<b>Zafarnama</b>	<b>An epistle of victory; it was a letter written by Guru Gobind Singh to Emperor Aurangzeb from a village Dina; it was in Persian and was a bold presentation of his case in which he justified the resort to arms.</b>

## I

BACKGROUND

Sikhism founded by Guru Nanak (1469-1539), during the sixteenth century, had attained a distinct identity and individuality by the time of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708). It was an organic growth — developing round the Guru, the Word of the Guru and the abode of the Guru.<sup>1</sup> The Sikhs made every conceivable sacrifice to assert their existence and guard the honour of their tripodal structure. The long-drawn out struggle of the Sikhs during the 18th century made them masters of the land where many a time they were declared out-laws.<sup>2</sup> In Ranjit Singh, the longing for political supremacy, nurtured by the Dal Khalsa in the 18th century, fructified. He endeavoured to set up a Panjabi State<sup>3</sup>, called Sarkar Khalsaji, which, however, could not last long. Whereas the Sikh rule brought wealth to the historic Sikh shrines, called, Gurdwaras, as a result of big land endowments, it also changed the life-style of the Sikh

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1. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, Amritsar, 1965, p.1.

2. The Proclamations of the Governors of Lahore, Khan Bahadur Zakarya Khan (1726-45) and Muin-ul-Mulk, popularly known as Mir Mannu (1748-53) concisely illustrate this.

3. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, Princeton, 1966, p.209.

priests. The introduction of rites and rituals, ceremonial and demonstrative practices had put the hands of the clock back and this, thoroughly, brain-washed the Sikh ruling class.<sup>4</sup> Ranjit Singh's death on June 27, 1839 created a big void.<sup>5</sup> The British who had been moving calculatingly and strategically towards the Panjab, conquered and annexed it on March 29, 1849.

The anarchy, preceding the annexation and the bloody wars, had stifled the will of the Sikhs and they failed to resist the annexation of their Kingdom. It was Bhai Maharaj Singh who carried on the struggle single-handed. He planned to take away Maharaja Dalip Singh from Lahore Fort and start the freedom struggle in the Bist Jullundur Doab in his name. But he was caught unaware in an enclosure near Adampur on the basis of information given by a Muslim informer to Mr. Vansittart, the then, Deputy Commissioner of Jullundur, leading to his deportation to Singapore where he died on July 7, 1856.<sup>6</sup> The defeat of the Sikhs was catastrophic. They 'lost not only

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4. Khushwant Singh in his Foreword to Barrier, N.G., The Sikhs and their Sacred Literature, New Delhi, 1970, p.1.

5. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p. 3.

6. Nabar Singh, Documents Relating to Bhai Maharaj Singh, Karamsar, 1968, p. XXIX.

the hope but also the desire of resistance.<sup>7</sup> As a result, the people of the Panjab could not contribute significantly to the uprising of 1857. A few of the Sikh soldiers along with a Sikh Brigadier were, no doubt, hanged at Amritsar.<sup>8</sup> At Hapur, Bhai Mohar Singh proclaimed Khalsa Raj; at Sialkot, Panjabi Police raised a banner of revolt and even its surrounding villages did not lag behind.<sup>9</sup>

The consequences of the loss of sovereignty were multi-dimensional and the socio-religious structure received a severe set-back. The defeated Khalsa lost vigilance of its sacred shrines.<sup>10</sup> The Mahants started ignoring the tenets and practices, characteristic of Sikhism. The number of Sikh votaries had also fallen off. A large number of Hindus who had adopted the symbols and practices of the Khalsa, deserted in thousands like rats forsaking the sinking ship. The Sikh citadel was under heavy fire from the British missionaries as well as from the Brahminical Hinduism. It was not surprising, therefore,

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7. Manchester Guardian, July 31, 1856, Quoted in Malik, Salahuddin, The Panjab and the Indian Mutiny (an article contributed to the Journal of Indian History, Indian Independence Silver Jubilee Number, August, 1972, p.350.
  8. Nahar Singh, Documents Relating to Bhai Maharaj Singh, op.cit., p.XXX.
  9. Parliament Paper 230 of 1859, p.27, Quoted in Fauja Singh, Who's Who of Panjab Freedom Fighters, Patiala, 1972, p.XIV.
  10. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.6.

that Lord Dalhousie and Sir George Russel Clerk visualised the disappearance of the Sikhs with the close of nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Undoubtedly, the Sikhs were enmeshed in forces which threatened their existence and their decline seemed visible.<sup>12</sup> Political defeat brought religious decadence in its wake.

In this hour of lassitude in the Sikh faith, a challenge came from Baba Dyal (1783-1854), a founder of the Nirankari Sect. He opposed idol worship and preached marriage reform. This tradition was elaborated by the Kukas under Baba Ram Singh. He denounced the influence of the Brahmins and Muslim Fakirs on the Sikhs and vehemently condemned the Sodhis and Bedis who got themselves worshipped. The Kukas soon moved towards more militant reforms. On Baisakhi day, in 1857, Baba Ram Singh administered 'Pahul' to the Sikhs in his village, Bhaini<sup>13</sup>, and created 22 centres in different parts of the country. The Commissioner of Ambala Division in his report to the Panjab Government on September 11, 1866 stated that "sooner or later Kukas will take recourse to arms against us. A martial nation which is at pains to regain its lost freedom will naturally realise that political freedom is the natural sequel to religious revival". The British smelt a rat in this religious and social

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11. Baird, Private Letters of the Marquis of Dalhousie, Edinburgh, 1911, p.69.

12. Major R. Leech, Notes on the Religion of the Sikhs and other Sects inhabiting the Punjab, (Quoted in Barrier, N.G., in The Sikhs and their Sacred Literature, op.cit., p.XVIII).

13. Bhaini, a village in the district of Ludhiana, has been the headquarter of the Kukas.



movement and took no time to suppress it ruthlessly.

In 1871 the Kukas held a conference at Khote <sup>14</sup> and some recalcitrant Kuka leaders, despite Baba Ram Singh's exhortations, attacked the butchers at Amritsar on June 14, 1871 and at Raikot on 15th July, 1871. Baba Ram Singh was held responsible for this outrage and his movements were restricted. But the Kuka intransigency could not be stemmed. Again some zealots attacked Malerkotla on January 15, 1872 and killed Kotwal Ahmedkhan and 7 sepoys.<sup>15</sup> Sixty eight Kukas were captured near the village Rar, 49 of whom were blown up with guns on January 17 under the orders of Mr. L.Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, while one boy was slaughtered to pieces. Next day the remaining 16 were got blown up by the orders of T.D. Forsythe, Commissioner, Ambala Division. Only 2 Kuka women were spared. Baba Ram Singh was deported to Rangoon where he died on 29th November, 1884.

Despite these movements, the discrimination against the Sikhs of lower castes continued and Brahminical Hinduism entrenched itself in the Sikh shrines.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless groundwork for the Sikh resurgence had been prepared.<sup>17</sup>

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14. Khote is a village in District Faridkot, now. It was, then, in Ferozepur District.

15. Lal Singh, Punjab Di Vir Parampara, Patiala, 1971, p.187.

16. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, op.cit., Vol.II, p.136.

17. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, Delhi, 1970, p.7.



The emergence of the Singh Sabha movement was the next notable development which created socio-cultural awareness and religious awakening among the Sikhs. The proselytising activities of the Christian missionaries culminating in the proclaimed intention of four Sikh pupils namely Aya Singh, Attar Singh, Sadhu Singh and Santokh Singh of the Amritsar Mission School, of renouncing their faith in favour of Christianity in 1873<sup>18</sup> as well as the anti-Sikh speeches of Hindu propagandists like Pandit Sharda Ram Phillauri inside the limits of Darbar Sahib, Amritsar sent a wave of shock among the Sikhs. It was under these disquieting circumstances that the first Singh Sabha was founded at Amritsar on October 1, 1873.<sup>19</sup> It was duly registered under the name of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, vide Act XXI of 1860. The Sabha stood for the love of religion among the Sikhs, advocated the propagation of Sikhism and Panjabi and scrupulously avoided and evaded political issues.<sup>20</sup> Its important members were Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanvalia, Baba Khem Singh Bedi of Kullar and Kanwar Bikram Singh of Kapurthala. Giani Gian Singh was its Secretary.<sup>21</sup> But it soon fell a prey to dissensions due to the conservative ideology of some of its leading members.

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18. Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, Delhi, 1983, p.232.

19. Teja Singh, Essays in Sikhism, Lahore, 1941, p.129.  
Also vide, 'Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for 1897-98, Lahore, 1898 No.62, p.CCXIX.  
Quoted in Dhillon, Gurdarshan Singh, Character and Impact of the Singh Sabha Movement on the History of the Panjab.

20. Jagjit Singh and Harbans Singh, Singh Sabha Lehar, Tarantarn, 1941, pp.131-33.

21. Daljeet Singh, Singh Sabha Da Modhi, Amritsar, 1951, p.13.

The Lahore Singh Sabha was founded on November 2, 1879. Its leading lights were Bhai Jawahar Singh, Bhai Ditt Singh and Bhai Maiya Singh. This Sabha fought on two fronts. It raised its voice against the conservative Sikh leaders on the one hand and on the other hand it countered the activities of the Christian missionaries as well as the onslaught of the Arya Samajists. In its two fold programme it gave a crushing blow to the gurudom and caste system as well. The number of the Sabhas rose to 120 in 1890. The rapid increase in the number of Singh Sabhas led to the founding of the General Sabha at Amritsar in 1880 which developed into Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, on April 11, 1883.<sup>22</sup> But this body too, from its very inception, was torn by internal dissensions, and the tussle for supremacy between the Amritsar and the Lahore parties wrecked it. This led to the formation of an independent Khalsa Diwan at Lahore in 1886. The leaders of the Lahore Diwan were progressive where as the Amritsar Diwan was the stronghold of the conservative elements — mainly the aristocrats and Mahants. The latter failed to appreciate the wind that was blowing to restore Sikhism to its pristine glory. Nonetheless during this period, the Sikhs were able to co-operate despite mutual acrimony and dissensions and established Khalsa College, Amritsar on March 5, 1892.

The Singh Sabha movement played its historic role by exposing the evils which had crept into the social and

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22. Ganda Singh, A History of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, 1949, p.3.

religious life of the Sikhs. It reclaimed Sikhism from "a state of utter ossification and inertia and articulated the inner urge of Sikhism for reform and gave it a decisive direction".<sup>23</sup> It not only checked the relapse of the Sikhs into Hinduism but also retaliated by carrying proselytising activities into the Hindu camp. A large number of the Hindus were baptised and the Sikh population which was 17,06,165 in 1881 rose to 21,02,896 in 1901 and never dwindled again.<sup>24</sup> Thus the Singh Sabha movement proved to be the elan vital in the regeneration of the Sikh society.<sup>25</sup>

The body which undertook several functions of the Singh Sabha was formed in 1902 and was called Chief Khalsa Diwan. It paved the way for National Revival by its impact on society, education and religion. Though it toed the line of the rulers, yet it always tried to bring the Sikh grievances to their notice. The contribution of the Chief Khalsa Diwan cannot be under-estimated. It spearheaded the movement to open colleges and schools throughout the State. The Sikh Education Conference was its annual feature since 1908 and it was able to add every year one High School.<sup>26</sup> The Khalsa Tract Society brought out literature

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23. Harbans Singh, Heritage of the Sikhs, Bombay, 1964, p.146.

24. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, op.cit., Vol.II, p.146.

25. Harbans Singh, Heritage of the Sikhs, New Delhi, 1983, p.232.

26. Sahni, Huchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.21.

of good merit. The polemic variety of the tracts furthered the cause of the Sikh religion by attacking its virulent opponents. During this period, Sikhism showed signs of new stirring. The Sikhs were now coming under the spell of the Neo-Sikhs who were insisting on separation from Hinduism and advocated mass reclamation of low-caste Sikh converts to Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. The Chief Khalsa Diwan also demanded reform of the gurdwaras. The Mahants of the Sikh shrines showed scanty respect for distinct symbol or theology.<sup>27</sup> They treated these places as their private property retaining the idols of Hindu gods, goddesses, paramours and their pornographic postures. The situation warranted drastic reform but the Chief Khalsa Diwan failed to take a strong stand. Even then the Mahants considered this body too progressive where as to the Neo-Sikhs it was too conservative and equivocating on key issues and hence was unable to lead the Sikhs. Nonetheless the movement proved fatal to the continued existence of the orthodox Sikhs observing Hindu practices and rituals.<sup>28</sup> In 1905 the idols were removed from the precincts of the Golden Temple, Amritsar. A movement of religious revival was evident as a sort of defence mechanism against the onslaught of the external pressure. The

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27. Barrier, N.G., The Sikhs and Their Sacred Literature, Delhi, 1970, p.xxii.

28. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, op.cit., p.55.

Government of India though admired the Sikhs for their bravery and religion and helped the Sikhs in their struggle by making the observance of the Khalsa tradition compulsory for the Sikh soldiers and civil servants.<sup>29</sup> Yet it dreaded the prospects of Tat-Khalsa Party (Neo-Sikhs) ever obtaining the possession of the Golden Temple. Even the bonafides of moderates and loyalists like Bhai Vir Singh, Sardar Tirlochan Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh and Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia were suspected.<sup>30</sup> It felt that the Neo-Sikh Party was suffering from a "wind in the head". Thus the imaginary fear led the Panjab Government to support the Mahants. The shift from tacit approval of the Sikh reformers, to active support for their opponents set the stage for intense conflict. However, when the circumstances took a dramatic turn in 1921, the British found themselves facing not the moderate Chief Khalsa Diwan, but the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and its militant auxiliary, the Akali Dal.<sup>31</sup>

When the Sikhs were thus surging with life and were impatient at the socio-religious phenomenon, on economic front they were not less unhappy. The Panjab Government introduced a

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29. Rahul Singh, Khushwant Singh's View of India, Bombay, 1974, p.94

30. D.Petrie, Memorandum on some Recent Developments in Sikh Politics, 1911. (Vide, The Punjab Past and Present Vol.IV, Part II, Oct. 1970, p.331.)

31. Barrier, N.G., The Sikhs and Their Sacred Literature, op.cit., p.XIV.



bill which affected the newly colonised lands, opened by the canals. This circumvented the rights of the peasants as well as provided for higher rates of assessment in Rawalpindi District and higher water rates on Bari Doab canals. This led to a grave discontent among the Jat Sikhs and made the Panjab a fertile soil for revolutionary seed.<sup>32</sup> The nationalist leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh made the peasantry politically conscious.<sup>33</sup> The meetings were held at Lahore, Rawalpindi, Amritsar and Lyallpur.<sup>34</sup> The soul-stirring song 'Pagri Sambhal O Jatta, Pagri Sambhal Oea', composed by Banke Dyal, pitched the movement firmly.

The students of the Khalsa College at Amritsar staged a hostile demonstration at the farewell visit of the outgoing Lieutenant Governor, Sir Charles Rivaz. The disaffection infiltrated into the ranks of the army as well. The Punjab Government of Sir Denzil Ibbetson saw in these happenings an incipient rebellion.<sup>35</sup> The authorities were alarmed as the agitation was mainly confined to the districts of Sikh predominance. Though many leaders were arrested and S. Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai were deported to Burma yet the movement could not be stamped out till

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32. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.157.

33. Barrier, N.G., The Punjab Disturbances of 1907 (vide The Modern Asian Studies, No.1, Vol.IV, 1967, p.353-83).

34. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.159.

35. Home-Political Department, File No.154-155/1909.



the Viceroy of India, Lord Minto, vetoed the bill. This agitation, for the first time, shattered the myth of the Sikh loyalty.

The agrarian agitation had brought the economic issue to the fore. It was a warning to the Panjab Government but it took no steps to remove the causes of unrest and ameliorate the lot of the Panjabis. Some of the hard-pressed and enterprising Panjabis, mostly the Sikhs, decided to emigrate in search of better opportunities leaving others behind, to keep the flame of revolution burning.<sup>36</sup>

The influx of the Punjabis to Canada and the U.S.A., started in the first decade of the 19th century. The number of Indians in Canada in 1901 was 2312 and in the U.S.A., according to Brant was 6313. It increased to 30,000 in both the countries.<sup>37</sup> This increase in numbers whipped up anti-Indian feelings and the Indian became victim of discrimination. Even the Governments of Great Britain and India did not listen to their memorials, representations and requests. This convinced them that only free people could command respect and their wrath, thus, fell rightly on the foreign rulers in India. They started simultaneously a struggle against the Immigration Act and thus it became a struggle against the colonial rule. Since

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36. Sayta, M.Ray, Punjabi Heroic Tradition, Patiala, 1970, p.28.

37. Bahensara, G.S., Ghadr Party Da Itihaas, Vol.I, Jullundur, 1961, p.20.

most of the immigrants were the Sikhs, the earliest organisations were established to build Gurdwaras which soon came up in Vancouver, Victoria and other cities.<sup>38</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that work against the British Imperialism was started in those countries mainly by the granthis i.e. scripture-readers in the Sikh Gurdwaras.<sup>39</sup> Subsequently, the Indians in the U.S.A. formed Hindustan Association of the Pacific Coast at Portland. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, G.D.Kumar and Pandit Kanshi Ram were elected President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Lala Hardyai was called from California. A weekly called the Ghadr was brought out and the Ghadr Party was organised on revolutionary lines.<sup>40</sup> This party planned to wage guerilla warfare in India and resolved to establish a Republic in Kashmir by 1925.<sup>41</sup>

But the Koma Gata Maru incident and the outbreak of the World War I compelled them to change their programme. Komagata Maru was a ship chartered on 20th March 1914<sup>42</sup> by Baba Gurdit Singh

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38. Satya, M.Ray, Panjabi Heroic Tradition, op.cit., p.34.

39. Nahar Singh, Documents Relating to Bhai Maharaj Singh, op.cit, p(੫).

40. "Hindustani Association was given the nomenclature of Ghadr Party, vide Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.176.

41. Statement of Dr. Chenchia p.9. (Through the Courtesy of D.B.Y.L., Jullundur).

42. Gurdit Singh, Voyage of Koma Gata Maru, Calcutta, n/d, p.20.

of village Sarhali,<sup>43</sup> to satisfy the condition of the Canadian Privy Council Order No.920.<sup>44</sup> There were 376 passengers in it including 346 Sikhs.<sup>45</sup> It started for Canada on 23rd May 1914, but the ship was not allowed entry and was compelled to leave Canadian waters on 23rd July, 1914, after a long struggle.<sup>46</sup> The ship was directed to go straight to Calcutta where it arrived on 26th September, 1914. The police insisted that the passengers should board the train bound for the Panjab. Only 50 men and two children boarded the train while others defied the police. In the combat, 19 were killed, 203 were arrested and 32 absconded.<sup>47</sup> Baba Gurdit Singh was one of those who escaped the police net. There was a sharp reaction against this high-handedness. It gave a powerful stimulus to the Ghadr movement.<sup>48</sup> It was in these circumstances that the Ghadr party leaders decided to go to India; consequently the first batch of the Ghadrites left Sanfrancisco in August, 1914. Ram Chandra said, "Your duty is clear. Go to India."

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43. It is a big, flourishing village, on the Harike - Amritsar road, near Tarntaran.

44. It envisaged that the immigrants must come by continuous journey and on through ticket from the country of their birth or citizenship.

45. Hira Singh, Merian Kuth Ithasik Yadan, Jullundur, 1955, p.93. According to him the number of the passengers was 360 only.

46. Sahensara, G.S., Ghadr Party Da Ithas, op.cit., p.130.

47. Josh, Sohan Singh, Hindustan Gadar Party, New Delhi, 1976, p.156.

48. O, Dwyer, Sir Michael, India As I Knew It, London, 1925, p.193.

Stir up rebellion in every corner of India".<sup>49</sup> But the Government of India was vigilant. It was able to intern 2500 in the villages and sent 400 to jails out of 8000 who came back in 1914-15. However, some important revolutionaries managed to escape.<sup>50</sup> They later on, organised themselves to stage an uprising and made strenuous efforts to develop contacts and establish links with the Indian soldiers at Mian Mir and Ferozepur.<sup>51</sup> They fixed 21st. February, 1915 for the uprising but the whole plan was foiled as C.I.D. entered inner circle by planting Kirpal Singh who leaked the information. Though they changed the date of uprising to 19th February<sup>52</sup>, yet the damage could not be undone. The police took action in time and arrested seven of the revolutionaries and disarmed the 23rd Cavalry at Mian Mir, Ferozepur, Sialkot and Rawalpindi. The carelessness and the complacency of the Ghadrites led to the collapse of the movement.<sup>53</sup>

When the Ghadrites were anxious to take advantage of the difficulties of the British imperialists, a large section of the Indians was anxious to win the British goodwill

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49 . F.C.Isemonger, An Account of Ghadr Conspiracy, (Quoted in Satya, M. Rai, Panjab's Heroic Tradition, op.cit., p.53).

50. Prominent among them were S.Kartar Singh Sarabha, Jagat Ram, Kanshi Ram, Prithvi Singh, Dr. Mathura Singh, Gurmukh Singh Lalton, Bhai Nidhan Singh, S.Harnam Singh and Bhai Bhagat Singh nee Gancha Singh of Kachar Bhann.

51. O'Dwyer, Sir, Michael, India As I Knew It, op.cit. , p.200.

52. Sahensara, G.S., Ghadr Party Da Ithas, op.cit.p.195.

53. Ibid., p.221.

by co-operating with them in their war-efforts. The Sikhs, in the Panjab, out did all others. Their number in the services rose to 100,000 by the end of the war, while in 1915 it was about 35000 only.<sup>54</sup> But, they were soon to muffle their hands. When the war ended, their woes increased due to the demobilisation. Thus the economic distress added to the political unrest.

The world-wide unrest which followed the war affected, to a marked degree, a country which had rendered great services to the empire in the hour of its peril. At such a psychological moment,<sup>55</sup> the Government of India passed the Rowlatt Bills, which intended to perpetuate the suspension of ordinary law safeguarding the rights and liberties of the people. It left them at the tender mercies of the executive or rather the police even in times of peace, exactly as in critical days of war. The Rowlatt Bills sought to curtail the liberty of the people. It provided for speedy trial of offences by a Special Court, which could meet in Camera and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian evidence Act. There was no place for "Dalil, Vakil and Apil". There was a wave of indignation against these "Lawless laws". Only one of the two bills, Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919, could be passed on March 18, 1919. Mahatma Gandhi started an agitation. He resorted to Satyagraha on March 20, 1919.<sup>56</sup>

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54. Leigh.M.S., The Punjab and the war, Lahore, 1922, p.44.

55. Datta, V.N., New light on the Punjab Disturbances, Simla, 1975, p.886.

56. Satya, M. Rai, Punjabi Heroic Tradition, op.cit., p.75.



and made a fervent appeal to observe hartal for a day. The date originally fixed was 30th March, 1919, but was changed to 6th April. There was a strike in Amritsar on April 6 and throughout the Panjab on April 10, 1919. Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Saif-ud-din, Kitchlew, the leaders who were guiding the movement in the panjab, were arrested on 11th April, from their homes in Amritsar and removed to the Dharamsala Jail. The show of power did not deter the people of the city. On April 13, 1919, a meeting was held in the Jallianwala Bagh despite prohibitory orders. General Dyer marched a platoon of Infantry to the Bagh. Without issuing any warning he ordered the troops to open fire upon a defenceless crowd of 10 thousand strong.<sup>57</sup> He kept on his merciless fusillade for ten consecutive minutes. When he ordered the firing to be stopped, 337 men, 41 boys and one seven-week-old baby had already fallen a prey to his fury.<sup>58</sup> His callousness and ruthlessness turned a protest meeting into a National Tragedy. Perhaps, he did it purposely to strike terror into the whole of the Punjab.<sup>59</sup> The event was described "Without parallel in the modern history of the British Empire, a monstrous event, an event which stood in singular and sinister isolation".<sup>60</sup> The heroic stand of the people of

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57. Majumdar, R.C., Struggle for Freedom, Vol.XI, Bombay, 1969, p.309.

58. Arthur Swinson, Six Minutes to Sunset, London, 1964, p.50.

59. Valentine, Chirol, The Indian unrest, New Delhi, 1979, pp.177-78.

60. Majumdar, R.C., Struggle for Freedom, op.cit., p.309.



Amritsar against the awful might of the British was epoch-making.<sup>61</sup> Gandhiji rightly remarked on October 20, 1920 in his speech at Lahore that "India rose through Jallianwala Bagh."<sup>62</sup> In the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Sikhs, who lost life, formed at least one third of the whole."<sup>63</sup> The Congress and other national parties lauded and honoured the martyrs of the Jallianwala Bagh. No wonder, when the Sikhs immediately afterwards started a movement against the Mahants which ultimately became a struggle against the British interference in the Gurdwara affairs, the leaders of all the major parties, sincerely helped the Sikhs. The Sikh masses, who upto now looked to Singh Sabhas and Chief Khalsa Diwan, formed the Central Sikh League under Gandhi's inspiration. This body was opposed to the Chief Khalsa Diwan's toadying to the British.<sup>64</sup> After seven decades, the Sikhs who were, by and large, not anti-government, were now on the other side of the fence. The English were called "snakes" by them.<sup>65</sup>

The reason for this conflict lay in the Panjab Government's attitude towards the control of the Gurdwaras. The Gurdwaras

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61. Raja Ram, The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Chandigarh, 1969, p.142.

62. Gandhi, M.K., The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, New Delhi, New Delhi, 1960-67, Vol.XVII, p.364.

63. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and Sikh Awakening, Jullundur, 1922, p.79.

64. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.167.

65. S. Rattan Singh Di Garj, Quoted in W.Er. Gustafson, Sources on Punjab History, Delhi, 1975, p.74.

belonged to the Sikh Community and the Mahants were simply the custodians. They had now begun to assert proprietary rights and, in fact, were becoming priest-proprietors.

The distinction of possession as owners and possession as custodians for carrying out the religious and charitable services was ignored. The Mahants began to exercise personal rights in the endowments and the resultant accumulation of wealth led to the deterioration of their character. These men were becoming unacceptable to the community. Their baptism and five symbols became a mere anomaly.<sup>66</sup> They had degenerated and were a handmaid of the rulers. They had degraded their venerated position. The British never wanted the Sikhs to be the masters of their Gurdwaras. A letter, written by Lieutenant R.E. Egerton, to the Viceroy, Lord Ripon on 8th August, 1881 showed them in their true colours. He wrote, "I think it would be politically dangerous to allow the management of the Sikh temples to fall into the hands of a committee emancipated from government control."<sup>67</sup> As such the Mahants under the government thumb failed to become the honest interpreters of the wishes of the Panth. They issued a commandment from the Akal Takhat in 1915 and condemned the Komagata Maru Sikhs.<sup>68</sup> Akal Takhat

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66. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, p. 34.

67. Quoted in Dilgir, H.S., Shiromani Akali Dal, Jullundur, 1978, p. 46.

68. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, op.cit., p.v.(foreword).

the seat of National Will and power, was now a mere altar where offerings were made.<sup>69</sup> Again in 1919, the community felt deeply insulted, when Rur Singh, the custodian of the Golden Temple, offered a Saropa to Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab. General Dyer was also offered a Kirpan (Sword of Honour) and it was quoted in the British Parliament by Lord Finlay that he had been made a Sikh.<sup>70</sup> This showed how the government-appointed Sarbrah and the Mahants had degenerated and disgraced themselves in the eyes of the Sikhs by their role as sycophants of the British.<sup>71</sup>

The way in which the Government of India acquired the land attached to the Gurdwara Rikabgarj, Delhi and the meek stand taken by the Chief Khalsa Diwan, had already infuriated the Neo-Sikhs. The Sikh militancy, thus aroused, reached new heights when the first world war ended. They were now dead-set on capturing the Gurdwaras which had been turned by the Mahants into brothels and cesspools of their nefarious activities and where neither a man's honour nor a woman's virtue was safe.<sup>72</sup>

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69. Gurbachan Singh and Lal Singh, The idea of a Sikh State, 1946, p.17.

70. Colvin, Ian, Life of General Dyer, Edinburgh, 1931, p.201.

71. Gulati, K.C., The Akalis-Past and Present, New Delhi, 1974, p.1. also Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, Delhi, 1972.

72. Mehtab Singh, Panjab Legislative Council Debates, March 14, 1921, p.360.

The newly formed Sikh League was also adopting a radical posture. It demanded that Darbar Sahib, Amritsar be placed in the hands of a representative body of the Sikhs,<sup>73</sup> but the Government procrastinated.

The challenge to the Mahants came from the Khalsa 'Biradari' of Amritsar which led the 'low caste converts' to the Golden Temple on October 12, 1920. The priests resisted their admission and even refused to accept Karah Parsad. It was only after the consultation of the Holy Book that the priests agreed to offer prayers and accepted food from the hands of the newlyconverted Sikhs.<sup>74</sup> The order from the Holy Book was: "He receives the lowly into grace and puts them in the path of righteous one". This had deep effect on the priests as well as the congregation. Then they moved to the Akal Takht but the priests there slipped away leaving the Guru Granth Sahib unattended. Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar and Teja Singh Bhuchar appointed a committee of 25 Sikhs for the management of Shri Akal Takhat.<sup>75</sup>

Thus the pujaris ousted themselves as they did not come back even when Sunder Singh Rangarhia, the Government-appointed sarbrah contacted them. Consequently, Teja Singh Bhuchar was

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73. Resolution of Sikh League, Amritsar, Quoted in Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, Delhi, 1976, p.21.

74. Niranjana Singh, Jiwan Yatra Master Tara Singh, Delhi, 1970, p.71.

75. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lahar, Amritsar, 1965, p.84.

appointed the first Jathedar of Sri Akal Takhat. There was no plan for the struggle that so miraculously developed into the Gurdwara Reform Movement.<sup>76</sup> On October 13, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar appointed a committee of 9 persons for the control of the Golden Temple.<sup>77</sup> It was then that the Sikhs planned to form a Central organisation of their own for the management of the Golden Temple, Akal Takhat and other Gurdwaras. This move unnerved the Panjab Government. Under such circumstances, Master Mota Singh, after much discussion and deliberations, got issued a mandate from the Akal Takhat.<sup>78</sup> An assembly of the Panth to control and govern the Sikh shrines was, thus, summoned. The Government, with the assistance of the Maharaja of Patiala, constituted a committee of 36 Sikhs with the motive of foiling their attempt.<sup>79</sup> The Akali leadership did not allow the strategy to succeed and formed a larger organisation of 175 members which included 36 Sikhs nominated by the Government. This committee was proclaimed the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee on November 15, 1920.<sup>80</sup>

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76. Bawa Harkishan Singh, Reminiscences of the Akali Movement, (reproduced in The Ait (English), p.8 of May 14-20, 1933).

77. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha-Te-Jhabbar, Delhi, 1967, p.61. He mentions the members as under: (1) Sunder Singh Ramgarhia, (2) Bawa Harkishan Singh (3) Bhai Dewa Singh, (4) Bahadur Singh Hakim, (5) Teja Singh Bhuchar (6) Kartar Singh Jhabbar, (7) Chanda Singh, (8) Dr. Gurbakhash Singh and (9) Prof. Teja Singh.

78. Ibid., pp.72-74.

79. Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, Delhi, 1973, pp.22-23.

80. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar, Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.89. Gustafson, (W. Eric), Sources on Panjab History, Delhi, 1975, p.1427 is not correct in ascribing 1921, as the year when F.G.P.C. was formed.



The leadership consisting of S. Sunder Singh Majithia, S. Harbans Singh Atari and S. Sunder Singh Ramgarhia was mainly loyal though genuinely interested in the reform programme of the Sikh shrines. Its first meeting took place on 12th December, 1920 and a committee of "5 Beloved ones" was appointed to draw up the mode, manner and method of the management and rituals to be followed in the Gurdwaras.<sup>81</sup>

The formation of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee provided a focal point for the movement for the reformation of Sikh religious institutions.<sup>82</sup>

During this period the Sikh League which had its start with the ultra-loyalist President Sardar Bahadur Gajjan Singh on December 27, 1919, at Amritsar, came to be controlled by the nationalists. It passed a resolution of non-cooperation with the government, under the influence of Gandhi Ji, at its Lahore session on October 20, 1920, despite the opposition of S. Teja Singh Bhuchar, Sardar Amar Singh of Lyall Gazette and Bhai Jodh Singh. The resolution was warmly advocated and upheld by Master Mota Singh, Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Sardar Harchand Singh Lyallpur, Sardar Teja Singh Samundri, Sardar Amar Singh and Sardar Parmukh Singh Jhabal. The Ghadrite veterans too advocated the conjunction with the mainstream of the national

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81. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, op.cit., p.21. Bhai Teja Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Bawa Harkishan Singh, Bhai Teja Singh Bhuchar and S. Balwant Singh, Rais Kulla were "five Beloved Ones."

82. Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, Delhi, 1983, p.270.



politics.<sup>83</sup>

Already the "Akali" brought out by Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri and Giani Hira Singh Dard and others on May 21, 1920 was playing the role of the precursor of the Akali Movement;<sup>84</sup> and in its first issue had outlined its programme advocating Panthic control over the Gurdwaras; Khalsa College, Amritsar and repairing of the demolished wall of Gurdwara Rakabganj, Delhi. The Sikh alignment with national mainstream made the Government anxious and it tried to arrive at some compromise with the Sikhs. The demolished wall of Gurdwara Rakabganj was got built before December 1, 1920 and Khalsa College was handed over to a college committee before 5th November, 1920. Though the British compromised when confronted with threats of violence, yet the relations once scarred were not repaired again. The Sikhs were awakened to a renewed sense of separate political identity based on religion and it eventually brought the Sikhs into conflict with the British. The Sikhs were firm in their endeavour to liberate the Gurdwaras from the control of the Mahants, to them the liberation of Gurdwaras was as important as the Khilafat Movement was to Mohammedans. 'Swaraj' to them included in its concept the liberation of the Gurdwaras as well.<sup>85</sup> Unfortunately, the

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83. Hira Singh, Merian Kujh Ithasik Yadan, op.cit., p.167.

84. Niranjana Singh, Principal, Mera Jivan Vikas, Delhi, 1970, p.75.

85. Teja Singh, Gurdwaras Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, op.cit., p.85.

Mahants on the instigation of the government officials defied the Sikhs. Such a situation could not be tolerated indefinitely.<sup>86</sup>

It was on 14th December, 1920 that the Shiromani Akali Dal was formed to assist the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Sardar Sarmukh Singh Jhabal was its first President.<sup>87</sup> It was to train men for taking over the Gurdwaras from the recalcitrant Mahants. The Akali Dal sent Jathas to different Gurdwaras, captured and handed them over to the Shiromani Gurdwaras Parbandhak Committee. By this time the Gurdwaras of Babe Di Ber, Sialkot, Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh, Peshawar, Panja Sahib, Sacha Sauda, Khadur Sahib, Than Sahib, Kira Sahib and Chohla Sahib passed into the hands of the Sikhs. All this happened peacefully; But the Akali zealots had their baptism of fire at Tarn Taran on January 25, 1921, where two Akalis fell victim to the priestly aggression.<sup>88</sup> It was only a prelude to what happened on February 20, 1921 at Nankana Sahib in which 130 persons were killed.<sup>89</sup> This tragedy marked the watershed in the Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh-British relations. The Sikhs now realised that they could oust the Mahants only if the government was compelled to withdraw its support to the latter.

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86. The Akali Te Pardesi, Amritsar, October 22, 1922.

87. Josh, Mohan Singh, Akali Morchian De Itias, op.cit., p.51.

88. Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.96.

89. Gurbax Singh Jhabalia, Sahidi Jivan, Nankana Sahib, 1938, p.573 gives a list of 86 Sikhs killed at Nankana. The Government report conceded 130 as killed, vide P.L.C.D. 304. Also see Punjab Govt. Communique of Feb. 27, 1921, quoted in the Civil and Military Gazette, Oct., 23, 1921. Kartar Singh Jhabbar, Saka Nankana Te Dugre Gurdwarian de Kabze Lain de Ballat (MSB) p.112, gives the number of killed as 150, vide Panch February 23, 1921 it was about 200.

On February 21, 1921 Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar with a Jatha of 2200 entered the Gurudwara Janam Asthan, Shri Nankana Sahib defying Deputy Commissioner's orders.<sup>90</sup> The show of force at this time retrieved the Sikh prestige. The Commissioner of Lahore, Mr. C.M. King yielded and asked Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar and Sardar Mehtab Singh to form a committee of seven members which immediately took control of the Gurudwara under the Presidentship of S. Harbans Singh Atari, a moderate Chief Khalsa Diwan leader.<sup>91</sup>

The Nankana tragedy had drawn the line. The Panjab Government was on the side of the Mahants where as the Sikhs masses and the Akali leadership drew sustenance from the national forces. The Government, calculatingly, followed a new policy. It tried to suppress the extremists and weaken the Akali agitation by offering many baits. Such circumstances led to a long struggle known as the Akali movement, which in turn prepared the ground for the genesis of a violent movement consisting of those Akalis who were militant and non-cooperators. It came to be known as the Babbar Akali Movement.

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90. Kartar Singh Jhabbar, Saka Nankana Te Dusre Gurdwarian de Kabze Lain de Hallat (MSB), p. 97.

91. Sardar Harbans Singh Atari was the grandson of Sardar Sham Singh Atari, veteran of the battle of Sabhraon, fought on February 10, 1946.

## II

ORIGIN OF THE BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT

So the Babbar Akali Movement was the natural sequel to the Gurdwara Reform Movement. The Sikhs had started a vigorous passive resistance movement for the control and management of the Gurdwaras under the pressure of the Sikh opinion, sometimes backed by the show of force. The Mahants began to yield and agreed to become paid granthis. The formation of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee on 15th December, 1920 and of the Akali Dal on 14th December, 1920 was a prelude of the coming struggle.<sup>1</sup> Even before this, the Sikhs had started an agitation, for the control of the Gurdwaras of Chomala Sahib at Lahore and Babe Ki Ber at Sialkot.<sup>2</sup> The Gurdwara Babe Ki Ber, Sialkot, was passed over to the Sikhs on October 6, 1920, when C.M. King, Commissioner Lahore Division approved the Committee of 13 persons under S. Kharak Singh to control the Gurdwara. On 12th October, 1920, Bhai Teja Singh Bhuchar made a sudden swoop on the Akal Takhat and took possession of the shrine.<sup>3</sup> The control of Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and Akal Takhat passed into the Sikh hands. On November 13, 1920, Gurdwara of Panja Sahib was also brought under their control. The

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1. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, op.cit., p.26.

2. Smith, V.M., The Akali Dal and S.G.P.C., A Confidential Memorandum, Simla 1922, Reproduced in the Punjab Past and Present, Vol.I, part II, October, 1967, p.280.

3. Ibid., p.266.

Panjab Government heaved a sigh of relief only on December 12, 1920 when the moderate Sikhs like Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, Sardar Harbans Singh of Atari and Sardar Sunder Singh Ramgarhia were elected President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The Government had always been apprehensive of the results of surrendering to the advocates of ultra-Sikhism.

The movement was proceeding, as the Government thought, on constitutional lines and the moderate element was sufficiently strong to discourage any hasty action.<sup>4</sup> But the suddenness with which the Sikh affairs were undergoing a change, falsified the hopes of the Government. The authorities were insensitive to the temper of the times.<sup>5</sup> The official attitude, that a person in whose name property was registered was prima facie the owner and could be ousted only by means of a suite was galling to the awakened Sikh masses. The three ways open to the Sikhs to carry out reform such as boycott, pressure of public opinion and litigation had proved ineffective.<sup>6</sup> The radical Sikhs who were sore at the malversation and abuses of every kind eschewed the ordinary processes of law and tried to capture the Gurdwaras. While professing to act in a non-violent manner,<sup>7</sup> a few zealot Akalis like Teja Singh of Chuharkana, Kartar

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4. Ibid., p.267.

5. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.197.

6. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, op.cit., p.86.

7. William, Rush Brook, India in 1921-22, Calcutta, 1922, p.60.



Singh Jhabbar and Teja Singh Bhuchar activated the campaign for the forcible seizure as well of the Gurdwaras. At the same time the politico-religious propaganda was started in the rural areas and the Sikh religious enthusiasm was assiduously nursed. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, whose object was to obtain control over all the Sikh Gurdwaras and religious institutions, soon came to be controlled by a caucus of extremists to whom the cause of religious reform differed little from extreme nationalism.<sup>8</sup> This unnerved the authorities. The Sikhs were now coming closer to the Indian National Congress as well. The Central Sikh League in its second session from 18th to 20th October, 1920 passed a resolution of non-cooperation with the government, despite its bait to concede the demand of complete control of the Sikh shrines.<sup>9</sup> By this time the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee had jettisoned the old Sikh idea of dependence on the government and began to mould the destiny of the Sikh nation.<sup>10</sup>

With the transfer of the Golden Temple and Akal Takhat to the Sikh community, the attached Gurdwaras of Tarn Taran and Baba Atal also fell into their hands. The actual possession of the Tarn Taran shrine was obtained only on 25th January, 1921 "at the sacrifice of two precious lives".<sup>11</sup>

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8. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.267.

9. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha Te Jhabbar, Delhi, 1967, p.72.

10. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.287.

11. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.21.



Sohan Singh Josh is of the view that the defiant and truculent attitude of the Mahants and subsequent attack on the unarmed Akalis was at the instigation of C.M. King, Commissioner, Lahore, Division.<sup>12</sup> However, the local authorities realising the innocence of the Akalis, debarred the Mahants from entering the Gurdwara and passed on the Gurdwara into the hands of the reformers. The Gurdwara Reform movement had caught a momentum now. On 14th February, 1921 Naurangabad and on 18th February, 1921 Khadur Sahib Gurdwaras were brought under the control of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The aim so far obviously was to reform management of the Gurdwaras and not to expel the Mahants. These were captured only when the Mahants became truculent with the connivance of the officials.<sup>13</sup>

The Sikhs were much alarmed at the acts of Mahant Narain Dass of Nankana Sahib Gurdwara, who, like his predecessor, Mahant Sadhu Ram, began to lead irreligious and licentious life. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee resolved on January 24, 1921 to call upon the Sikhs to assemble in a diwan at Nankana Sahib from March 4-6, 1921 so that Mahant might be impressed upon, the urgency of reform. Some zealot reformers like Kartar Singh Jhabbar even talked of forcible occupation of the Gurdwara. The Mahant on the other hand "began to collect weapons with which to defend himself from the attack planned

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12. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Itiha, Delhi, 1972, p.56.

13. Ibid., p.57.

on him."<sup>14</sup>

The preparation by the Mahant could not have gone unnoticed and official inaction to dissuade the Mahant from the suicidal step stemmed only due to their complicity in the whole affair. Mr. C.M. King, Commissioner Lahore Division, received a deputation of the Mahants in December, 1920 and gave certain legal advice which was published and freely distributed by Baba Kartar Singh Bedi. This created very bad effect and it was considered that this might lead to bloodshed.<sup>15</sup> The fear was not unfounded. The change in the attitude of the Mahants followed the change in the policy of the Government. Mahant Narain Dass who had agreed to enter into a dialogue, failed to turn up for talks on 7th February, 1921 at Sacha Sauda and on February 14, 1921, at Sheikhupura. Instead, he evolved a strategy to murder the top Akali leaders during the diwan to be organised by them from March 4-6, 1921. The information regarding this nefarious plan was supplied to Kartar Singh Jhabbar by his confidant Avtar Singh, who lived in the company of Mahant Narain Dass.<sup>16</sup> Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar alongwith Bhai Lachhman Singh of Dharowal and Bhai Buta Singh of Lyallpur decided to occupy Gurdwara Janam Asthan on February 20, when Mahant would be busy

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14. Punjab Legislative Council Proceedings, March, 1921, C.M.King confessed this in the personal explanation, in the council.

15. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.64.

16. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha by Jhabbar, op.cit., p.101.

with the Sikh Sanatan conference at Lahore.<sup>17</sup> Though they tried to keep their move a closely guarded secret<sup>18</sup> from the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee but, somehow, S. Teja Singh Samundari, Master Tara Singh and Sardar Harchand Singh Lyallpuri got the wind of it. They reached Lahore and were joined by Sardar Sardul Singh Caveesher, Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, Sardar Jaswant Singh of Jhabal and Bhai Dalip Singh. S. Jaswant Singh and Bhai Dalip Singh were asked to dissuade the Jathas from reaching Nankana Sahib. They contacted Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar and it was left to Bhai Dalip Singh to contact Sardar Lachhman Singh of Dharewal at Chander Kot, but he failed to establish links with him there.<sup>19</sup>

He reached Nankana Sahib and sent a messenger to Lachhman Singh who agreed not to proceed but coaxed by Bhai Tehal Singh went to the Gurdwara to pay obeisance. Thereupon the ghastly crime was perpetrated upon the innocent Sikhs.<sup>20</sup> They were subjected to bullets and firing without any provocation and "without parley or question".<sup>21</sup> The number of the killed will remain a mystery for ever but the Panjab Government conceded 130 deaths.<sup>22</sup> Karam Singh Station Master, who heard the sound of the

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17. Dilgir, Harjinder Singh, Shiromani Akali Dal, Jullundur, 1978, p.72.

18. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha To Jhabbar, op.cit., p.109

19. The place is not Sunder Kot as has been erroneously given by Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, op.cit., p.64 and Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.31. See, Partap Singh Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.102.

20. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, op.cit., p.65.

21. The Tribune, Lahore, 15 September, 1921.

22. See Foot note 89, Ch.1.

bullets, left for the Gurdwara and came to know of the facts. He, immediately sent telegrams to the various quarters.<sup>23</sup> The Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhupura, Mr. J.C. Currie reached there around 12-30 p.m. The Sub-Inspectors of Warburton and Mangatwala Police Stations reached after him. C.M.King, Commissioner of Lahore Division with a military force of 100 British and 100 Indian soldiers and the D.I.G. of Police and several Sikh Sardars arrived in the evening. The military was put on guard.<sup>24</sup> The tragedy had shaken all and sundry. Sir John Maynard assured in the Panjab Legislative Council on March 22, 1921 that the Government would make every effort to conduct a full and impartial enquiry<sup>25</sup> and would bring the offenders to justice to assuage the intensity of the Sikh agony.

The authorities, immediately set to work and arrested Mahant Narain Dass, two of his disciples and 26 Pathans. The Gurdwara was also put under the protection of the Government. Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar was infuriated at it and he set out from the Gurdwara Khara Sauda with 2200 Akalis and reached Janam Asthan Gurdwara trampling every order under foot and ignoring

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23. Telegrams were sent to Sir Edward Maclagan, the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab; D.C. Sheikhupura, Mr. J.C. Curry; S.P. Sheikhupura; Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and Mahatma Gandhi.

24. The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, February 22, 1921.

25. Statement of Sir John Maynard, Punjab Legislative Council Debates, 8th January to 16th April, 1921, Vol. I, p. 7.

every authority. At this show of force, the Commissioner yielded and handed over the keys to a Committee of seven members under the Presidentship of Sardar Harbans Singh of Atari.<sup>26</sup> The Mahants of other local Gurdwaras also accepted the control of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, without any further procrastination. This tragedy suscitated the Sikh anger. They suspected intrigue behind the carnage of the innocent and non-violent Sikhs. Some of them openly expressed this view to the, then, Panjab Governor, Sir Edward Maclagan, on his arrival at Nankana Sahib on 22nd February, 1921.<sup>27</sup> It was sincerely believed that an avoidable tragedy could have been averted. The leaders of the Congress, the Sikh League, the Chief Khalsa Diwan and the Sikh members of the Panjab Legislative Council reached the spot and expressed their shock. Mahatma Gandhi called it a "second edition of Dyerism, more barbarous, more calculated and more fiendish than the Dyerism of Jallianwala."<sup>28</sup> He strongly believed that in this carnage "Government also had a hand."<sup>29</sup> On 3rd March, 1921 he attended a diwan

26. Kartar Singh, Jhabbar, Saka Nankana Te Dusre Gurdwarian Te Kabaze Lain de Hallat, (MSS) op.cit. p.97.

27. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.79.

28. Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.XIX, New Delhi, 1960-67, p.401.

29. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.82.



in which S. Kartar Singh Jhabbar spoke, that "just as the rising sun awakens the people from sleep, in a like manner, preparations for Swaraj have raised the Sikhs from their slumber. That is why they have demanded religious freedom as the first step towards the attainment of their objective."<sup>30</sup> What the Mahant of Nankana Sahib had done was unparalleled in the history of mankind. Since then the Sikhs had made up their mind not to let the Mahants make Gurdwaras resorts of gamblers, wine bibbers and bad characters".<sup>31</sup>

This tragedy turned a larger part of the Sikh Community into the proponents of the reform of the Gurdwaras and consequently they became Akalis.<sup>32</sup> They, subsequently, stepped up the process of occupying the Gurdwaras forcibly. The control of Luliani on February 23, 1921; Behr on February 25, 1921; Rori Sahib on February 28, 1921; Sach Khand (Chuharkana) on March 5, 1921; Gurdwara Manak on March 6, 1921; Tham Sahib at Jhambar on March 7, 1921 and Gurdwara Ram Das on March 12, 1921, by the Sikhs was a pointer to the new mood of the community.<sup>33</sup> It was the immediate result of the massacre at Nankana Sahib which

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30. Quoted in Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.81.

31. Statement of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh, Punjab Legislative Council Debates, 8th January to 16th April, 1921, Vol.1, p.544.

32. Ibid., p.545.

33. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.252-54, Section 1-1.



accentuated the prejudices of the reforming party against the incumbents of the Gurdwaras. It also led to the crisis of confidence. The Sikhs lost faith in the Government. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, in its meeting, held from 4-6 March, 1921 at Nankana Sahib, boycotted the Government Inquiry Committee. It was Master Mota Singh who brought the resolution proposing the boycott of the Inquiry Committee to investigate the case of martyrs. The resolution was passed despite the opposition of Sardar Harbans Singh of Atari, Bhai Jodh Singh and Sardar Kartar Singh Jhabbar.<sup>34</sup> It was also resolved to take over the Gurdwaras forcibly if those were not handed over by April 3, 1921.<sup>35</sup>

This incensed the Panjab Government. Since then, its policy was ranged totally against the Akali agitation.<sup>36</sup> It embarked upon a path of repression. It put Mr. J.W. Bowring, notoriously hostile to the Sikh aspirations, incharge of the investigation.<sup>37</sup> It encouraged members of the Chief Khalsa Diwan to collaborate with the Government and considered them natural leaders.<sup>38</sup> Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, who was

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34. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha Te Jhabbar, op.cit., p.133. Also vide S.G.P.C. Resolution No.571.

35. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., pp.83-84.

36. Gopal Singh, A History of the Sikh People, Delhi, 1979, p.655.

37. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.66.

38. Niranjan Singh, Akali Lehar Dian Yadan (An article in the Jathedar, Jullundur, 13th August, 1967),.

a member of the Legislative Council and was sworn in on February 23, 1921,<sup>39</sup> was made Revenue Minister. In the eyes of the radical Sikhs, he became a Jholiehuck,<sup>40</sup> The Panjab Government now followed a two-pronged policy of suppressing the Akali movement and at the same time initiating such a Gurdwara Bill which might ensure its direct or indirect control.<sup>41</sup> The letter of the Government of India to the Governor of the Panjab also showed concern at the lawlessness of the Sikhs and advised him to exercise control immediately.<sup>42</sup> Then the wholesale arrests began and about 150 Akalis were arrested and most of them were convicted of various charges.<sup>43</sup> S. Kartar Singh Jhabbar was sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment and S. Teja Singh Bhuchar to seven years of imprisonment on the charges of dacoities, robberies and thefts, etc.<sup>44</sup>

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39. Panjab Legislative Council Debates, January 8 to April 16, 1921, Vol.I, p.7.

40. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.200.

41. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, op.cit., p.98.

42. Letter of W.H.Vincent, member of G.G.'s Council to Sir Edward MacLagan, Governor Panjab, dated March 13, 1921, No.621-Police.

43. Narain Singh, Akali Morcha Te Jhabbar, op.cit., p.134. Also vide Dilgir, H.E. Shiromani Akali Dal, op.cit., p.75, and Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian da Ithas, op.cit., p.98, give the date of arrest as March 15, 1921.

44. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.67.

Thus the leaders who were in the vanguard of the Gurdwara Reform movement were put behind the bars. The whole Sikh community was shocked at the convictions of their venerated leaders. Meanwhile, the control of the Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee also passed into the hands of the professed non-cooperators.<sup>45</sup> The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee passed a resolution to free all the Akalis by 10th April, 1921, reiterating its stand that it did not believe in the forcible occupation of the Gurdwaras. But the Nankana affair and its after-math brought to the fore another group to which non-violence was nauseating. They advocated non-cooperation but decried its programme of non-violence. The group was deeply inspired by Master Mota Singh, who escaped police net after making anti-government speeches in the Sikh diwans. His speeches aroused the Sikh militants to take recourse to violence and murder all those who were allegedly responsible for the Nankana carnage. These Akalis met separately at Hoshiarpur on the occasion of the Thirteenth Sikh Education Conference, held from 25th to 27th March, 1921.<sup>46</sup> They created disturbance in the conference as well and worked on a separate programme.<sup>47</sup>

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45. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.271.

46. Charan Singh and Darbara Singh, The Work of Sikh Education Conference, Amritsar, 1924, and Akali, March 31, 1921, Lahore p.4 give the correct date whereas Satya M.Rai, Punjabi Heroic Tradition, op.cit., pl 77, Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.144, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar op.cit., Giani Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Lehar, op.cit., p.300 give the date from March 19 to 21, 1921, which is not correct.

47. The Akali, Lahore, April 1921.

They were equally patriotic believing in the militant traditions of the Nihangs.<sup>48</sup> They decided to murder C.M.King, the Commissioner of Lahore Division, J.W. Bowring, S.P., C.I.D., Mahant Dewa Dass of Nankana and Basant Dass of Manak, Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia as well as Baba Kartar Singh Bedi, all alleged to be responsible for the Nankana tragedy.<sup>49</sup> The plan misfired and the brain behind the scheme had to abscond, but this put the group on a different track. Thus was formed the nebulous terrorist group. Its formal appearance paved the way for the movement which came to be known as the Babbar Akali Movement.<sup>50</sup> Even Khan Sahib Mir Fazal Inam, D.S.P., C.I.D., Panjab also alluded to this when he stated that "after the Nankana affair certain Akalis conspired together to murder the government officials and its supporters. Two conspirators were arrested. Kishan Singh went into hiding in the Doaba and all the efforts of the police to arrest him failed for a considerable time. This organisation (Chakarvarti Jatha), subsequently merged into the Babbar Akali Jatha."<sup>51</sup> No wonder, then, that the Babbar Akali movement took birth after the Nankana Tragedy. Master Mota Singh formed a band of Sikh desperadoes to avenge the murder of the innocent Sikhs. This band undertook to protect Master Mota Singh at the cost of their lives and acted as his bodyguards.

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48. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.201.

49. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.75, Also Home-Political File No.268/1922, p.12.

50. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.205.

51. Paper Book Babbar<sup>Akali</sup> Conspiracy, p.842.

S. Kishan Singh Gargaj was foremost among his devotees who further carried on a relentless campaign of preaching rebellion and threatening loyalists. He gathered round him a band of activists, who subsequently came to be known as the Babbar Akalis.<sup>52</sup>

The Government policy during the Gurdwara Reform movement and the atrocious treatment meted out to the Akali prisoners added insult to the injury. With every excess, the militants became more desperate. The Sikh peasants had been "committed to a policy of self-determination and had been induced by some mysterious process of mass psychology to enter a sphere of activity which was of national interest and was bitterly anti-British."<sup>53</sup>

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee was aware that violence would only have retrogressive effect, and exerted its influence to restrain the more impetuous of its followers who were expressing their readiness to settle the Gurdwara issue at the point of the sword.<sup>54</sup> Despite this clear position, the Government attitude was not helpful. It was bent upon controlling the Gurdwara Reform movement through its stooge, the Chief Khalsa Diwan. The confrontation of the loyalists and non-cooperators on 11th May, 1921, once again demonstrated the majority of the radicals in the S.G.P.C., when

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52. Home-Political, File No.200/1926, p.10.

53. Smith, V.M., Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.299.

54. Ibid., p.276.



loyalists failed to forestall the resolution of non-cooperation.<sup>55</sup>

The Government put Sardul Singh Caveesher under arrest on 27th May, 1921 as it was he who had spearheaded the non-cooperation resolution. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee headed by S. Kharak Singh also endorsed the policy of non-cooperation, on 28th August, 1921. The Akali leaders began their tour of the province urging the Sikhs to join the Akali Dal and rise as one man to liberate their Gurdwaras. For this purpose a Shahidi Dal was raised in September, 1921. At Teja and Hothian a large number of Akalis appeared as if by magic<sup>56</sup> and captured the Gurdwaras on September 6, 1921 and November 1, 1921, respectively.<sup>57</sup>

The Government, once again, tried to brow-beat the Sikhs on key's affair. On October 29, 1921 the Sarbrah of the Golden Temple was asked by the S.G.P.C. to hand over the keys to its President. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar sent his nominee to collect keys from the Sarbrah to forestall the S.G.P.C. decision. This led to an agitation. The Deputy Commissioner, thus, threw a lighted match in the highly inflammable powder keg. The clamping of Seditious Meetings Act and arrest of 193 leading Akalis failed to cow them down. The committee

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55. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Itihas, op.cit., p.88. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.203, gives the date as May 21, which is not correct.

56. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.272.

57. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.135.



declared that the surrender of the keys to S.Kharak Singh, the uncrowned King of the Sikhs, would alone give them satisfaction. When the Government found "that no body among the Sikhs was prepared to contest the claims of the SGPC to represent the religious views of the community, it acquiesced in the management of the temple by that body" and handed over the keys of the treasury to S. Kharak Singh.<sup>58</sup> The morcha on Key's affair was started on 7th November, 1921 and came to an end on 17th January, 1922. The Government also had to release the prisoners unconditionally. The unique response of the Sikh Community as well as ceaseless propaganda campaign by the Chakravarti Akalis against this high-handedness of the Government had aroused, a wave of resentment. Consequently, the Government had to yield and the Sikhs, thus, won, "First Decisive Battle For India's Freedom."<sup>59</sup> In the Key's affair, the Punjab Government had humbled itself to the dust before the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

To retrieve its prestige, lost in the Key's affair, the Government committed another folly. Mahant Sunder Dass of Gura Ka Bagh had agreed to serve under a committee of eleven members appointed by the SGPC on 23rd August, 1921, but the land remained in his possession.<sup>60</sup> The Sikhs used to hew wood from

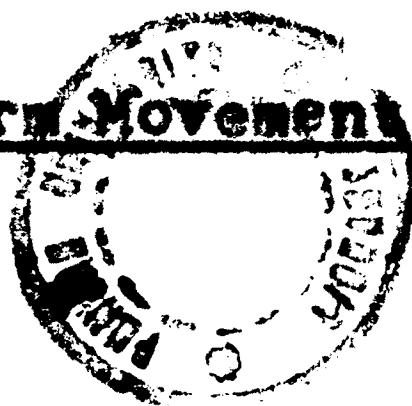
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58. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.270.

59. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, op.cit., p.11.

60. Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening, op.cit., pp.396-97.

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the land for the common kitchen and Mahant, under instigation from the high-ups, lodged a complaint against the Akalis,<sup>61</sup> and that also after the arrests, to support a step already taken in consonance with the instructions issued by the Home Secretary.<sup>62</sup> The Panjab Government found an excuse to implement its policy of suppression of the Akalis. The authorities arrested 5 Akalis on 9th August, 1922, the day when this Morcha was launched. It lasted upto 17th November, 1922 and till that date the number of arrests amounted to 5605 including 35 members of the SGPC.<sup>63</sup> The Government tried various tactics. It abandoned rounding up the volunteers and started beating the Jathas mercilessly under the personal supervision of S.G.M. Beatty, D.S.P. Amritsar. But the Sikhs were undeterred and the tidal upsurge of the masses was not to be stemmed. The violent use of force on the non-violent Akalis had great impact in and outside the Punjab. The Government brutality was condemned and the sight "of the hundreds of Christs" being crucified won the applause of the national leaders. C.F. Andrews, in his eye-witness account, exposed the brazen-faced policy of the Government. He wrote that the Akalis were undergoing their baptism of fire and they cried to God for help, out of depths of their agony of

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61. <sup>Jodh</sup> Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, op.cit., p.157.

62. Home-Political, File No.459-II/1922. Also vide Teja Singh, Gurdwara Reform Movement, op.cit., p.399.

63. Amar Singh, Sikh Panth Kithon Ton Kithe, Amritsar, 1970, p.291 and Ganda Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh Ab-hinendan Granth, Ludhiana, 1962, p.49.

of spirit.<sup>64</sup> The police beat the Akalis with iron-tipped rods and batons, till blood began to flow and the brave Sikhs fell unconscious, M.R. Jayakar rightly wrote that it "was a new heroism steeled by suffering, a war of spirit."<sup>65</sup>

The insults heaped upon the Akalis were unbearable. They were given inhuman punishments and their religious symbols were desecrated and hair were pulled out. Though the Panjab Government extricated itself with the help of Sir Ganga Ram but its effect on thousands of the Sikhs was tremendous. The religious fervour of the Akalis was at its highest pitch. They were seething with wrath and hatred against the British rulers and lost all faith in non-violence. It is not surprising that a large number of the Akalis who took part in the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha either joined the Babbar Akali Jatha or worked actively to help the Babbar.<sup>66</sup> It created maximum resentment among the Sikhs of the Doab who still cherished the memories of the courage and bravery of the Ghadriles. In fact, they ridiculed the policy

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64. Views of C.F. Andrews quoted in Bhagat Lakshman Singh's Autobiography, Calcutta, 1965, (Ed. Ganda Singh), p.263.

65. Jayakar, M.R., The story of My Life, Vol.II, 1922-25, New York, 1959, pp.34-35.

66. Some of the important members arrested in the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha included Milkha Singh and Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Amar Singh of Rajowal, Nand Singh of Ghurial, Ram Singh of Muzara Kalan, Lakha Singh and Bhola Singh of Kot Fatuhl, Chhaja Singh of Massanian, Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad, Hari Singh of Daulatpur, Amar Singh of Dhariwal, Sardul Singh and Kartar Singh of Burro Barrian, Banta Singh of Behbalpur, Labh Singh of Jassowal and Hazara Singh of Munder. Vide Partap Singh Gurdwara Sudhar Arthak Akali Sehar, op.cit., pp.237,240,242 and Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, pp.587-590 and 596-599.

of passive resistance.<sup>67</sup> When the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha was in full swing in September 1922, Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj sent a letter to the then S.G.P.C. Secretary, Bhagat Jaswant Singh and urged upon him the necessity to make recourse to the sword.<sup>68</sup> No doubt, the Babbar Akali movement took its final shape during this Morcha<sup>69</sup> and those who could not stomach the discipline of Satyagraha took to dynamite, bomb and pistol and became the Babbar Akalis.<sup>70</sup> The atrocities inflamed the Sikh passion for revenge and no true disciple of Guru Gobind Singh could remain loyal to the British after witnessing these atrocities.<sup>71</sup>

The role of the toadies further exasperated the Sikhs and they began to discuss the futility of non-violence.<sup>72</sup> Thus a few Akalis who had actively participated in the Gurdwara Reform Movement and had lent a helping hand, became the Babbar Akalis.<sup>73</sup> The Gurdwara Reform movement had attracted the Sikhs of allshades. Infact, the struggle to liberate the Gurdwaras from the clutches of the Mahants was considered the first step towards the liberation of the country. No wonder, it included the ex-Ghadrites, Congress workers, ex-soldiers as well as active

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67. Perti, R.K., Journal of Indian History, Vol.I, Part II, p.496.

68. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, pp.77-78.

69. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Itiha, op.cit., p.8.

70. Gulati, K.C., The Akalis: Past and Present, Delhi, 1974, p.1.

71. Niranjan Singh, Gora Sahi Jhakhar, (Mss-proscribed), p.3.

72. Ibid., p.158.

73. The Tribune, Lahore, 24th October, 1924.

soldiers. All those Akalis who regarded the policy of courting arrests and undergoing inhuman punishments as cowardice, became Chakarvartis. They formed the core of the Babbar Akalis. The policy of repression and suppression followed by the Government was largely responsible for the emergence of the Babbar Akalis. Even the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee admitted in one of its Declarations that sincere Akalis were compelled to adopt this course as a result of repressive policy of the government. The atrocities perpetrated during the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha amply bore this out, with the result that the radicals openly advocated the wielding of the sword.<sup>74</sup> The harsh and brutal treatment meted out to the Akalis in jails further aggravated their wrath. No doubt, the wave of uninterrupted atrocities on their brethren since the pre-Gurdwara reform days and the cruel beatings in Guru Ka Bagh Morcha and the atrocities committed in Attock jail prompted sincere Akalis to take to violent activities.<sup>75</sup> Some quarters attribute the fomentation at the Babbar Akalis to the factors other than the Gurdwara Reform movement. This is only partially correct. One such factor was the Ghadr movement. The emergence of the Babbar Akalis was thought to be the result of resuscitation of the militant spirit of the Ghadrites which was fairly widespread in the Doab. They were alleged to have contacts with the Trans-Frontier revolutionaries as well. The fighting nature of the Sikhs, "the

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74. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.250.

75. Ibid. p.257 (He has quoted the S.G.P.C. Declaration No.494 of April 24, 1923) Also vide Home-Political File No.25,1923.



"the experience of the Ghadr campaign of 1915 and the fanaticism which the cause of the Gurdwara Reform evoked had already warned the authorities of the possibilities of the outrage".<sup>76</sup> It was believed that they received large sums of money for revolutionary propaganda from their counterparts still in America and Canada.<sup>77</sup> Some of the returned emigrants who took part in the Gurdwara Reform movement realised the futility of non-violence and they urged the Akalis to resort to arms. Like Ghadrites, they used 0.32 calibre revolvers and Mauser pistols and brought out a newspaper to propagate their views effectively. Even their modus operandi bore close resemblance with that of the Ghadrites. Some of the returned emigrants like Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Asa Singh of Phakrudi who first joined Congress Party, were soon involved in the Gurdwara Reform movement.<sup>78</sup>

No doubt, some of the ex-Ghadrites turned out to be the leaders of the Babbar Akali Jatha.<sup>79</sup> Even Sir Michael O'Dwyer, considered those Ghadrites, the nucleus of the new revolutionary movement of the Akali Sikhs.<sup>80</sup> The basis of

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76. Smith, V.M., A Confidential Memorandum, op.cit., p.257.

77. The Civil and Military Gazette, 5th October, 1923.

78. Reading Papers (Mss), Eur, 238/IV Vol.II, 168-Tel No.202, 13, June 1923.

79. Labh Singh, Sankhep Ithas Babbar Akali, Hoshiarpur, 1962, p.1

80. O'Dwyer, Sir Michael, India as I Knew it, op.cit., p.209.



the struggle was inherent in the Doaba. Their limited holdings forced them to try their luck elsewhere; some went to foreign lands but the humiliation suffered by them at the hands of the foreign masters had led them to think of complete liberation from the foreign yoke. Back home, they were interned within the limits of their villages. When the Gurdwara Reform movement started they became enthusiastically active. Revolutionary activity was the need of the hour and the presence of a large number of emigrants from Canada, in the Doab, whose enthusiasm had not yet languished, gave new colour to the Akali movement. It may be pertinent to point out that these ex-Ghadrites first joined the Congress Party. Some of them like Karam Singh Jhingar, Baba Karam Singh Chima and Bhag Singh Canadian were members of the Executive Committee, District Jullundur. Assa Singh and Karam Singh of Daulatpur were members of the Executive Committee of the District Congress, Hoshiarpur.<sup>81</sup> When the movement for the reformation of the Gurdwaras was started, they plunged into the struggle. Bhag Singh Canadian, Karam Singh Jhingar, Karam Singh of Daulatpur and Assa Singh of Phakrudi arranged diwans and conference in Jullundur and Hoshiarpur districts. They were a force to reckon within the Akali Dal. It will be of interest to mention that the General Meeting of the Akali Dal, held on 27th August, 1922 at Akal Takhat was presided over by Piara Singh Langari, another ex-Ghadrite.<sup>82</sup> Soon, some of them felt disgusted with

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81. Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik (Mss), p.37.

82. Register Karwai Akali Dal, p.47.

the policy of the passive resistance adopted by the Congress and subsequently followed by the Akali Dal. They took to arms and became an integral part of the Babbar Akali Jatha, under Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj. The atrocities at Nankana Sahib and Guru Ka Bagh led them to resemble and reorganise themselves with a view to continuing the work of 1914-15 revolutionaries.<sup>83</sup> Quite rightly, the Gurdwara Reform movement was the only ventilator available to them through which they expressed their piled up indignation.

It may be emphasized that their indignation stemmed from personal reasons as well. Karam Singh Jhingar was one of the passengers of Koma Gata Maru alongwith Baba Gurdit Singh. The volley of insults and indignities heaped upon them glowed like burning coal and could not be easily forgotten. Besides, all the emigrants were rendered penniless. Thus the economic factor was surely one of the causes which turned them hostile against the government. In the case study of the revolutionaries, one is tempted to conclude that they start from their own concern and work outwards rather than start from the national needs and work inwards.<sup>84</sup> It is also significant that the demobilisation and dismissal of the soldiers also added, in no small measure to their simmering

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83. Gulab Singh, Under the Shadow of Gallows, Delhi, 1963, p.35.

84. Datta, V.N., Madan Lal Dhingra, Delhi, 1978, p.84.

discontentment because thus rendered unemployed and having nothing much to depend upon, they began to seeth with revenge.<sup>85</sup> This also told upon the morale of the serving soldiers. There was little surprise then that a large number of the accused in the Babbar Akali cases and most of the approvers had served at the time or the other in the army. Some of them like Ganga Singh, Naik (accused No.62) and Partap Singh (accused No.63) were arrested while serving in 52nd Sikh Regiment.<sup>86</sup>

The soldiers who had shed their blood and won victory for their rulers were dismayed when they were not allowed to wear their religious emblems like Kirpans and black turbans and were being court-martialled and discharged on flimsy grounds, a wave of righteous indignation spread among them and their blood began to boil. Their participation in the Gurdwara Reform movement too gave it a new dimension. It accounted for their overwhelming numbers in the Babbar Akali Jatha Doaba. The official record showed that the number of the Babbar Akalis who had served in the army and were involved in the conspiracy cases was not fewer than 54.<sup>87</sup>

The political climate of the country too played its role in fomenting the revolutionary activities of the Akalis.

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85. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(MSS,)p.17

86. Babbar Akali Conspiracy, Judgement,1925,p.2.

87. Home-Political, File No.200/1926,p.34.

It was very much there in the background. The people were already unhappy at the passage of the Rowlatt Bill. They were becoming more violent in their utterances, more extravagant in their hopes, more clamorous in their demands and more hostile to the administration.<sup>88</sup> Lala Duni Chand made it clear to the Viceroy in the Panjab Provincial Congress Session in 1918, held at Amritsar that their cup of disappointment and discontent was full to the brim.<sup>89</sup> Sir, Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab, who was known for his iron-hand approach, resorted to martial law and summary justice.<sup>90</sup> The Jallianwala Bagh massacre resulted in 381 deaths and it created a river of blood between the people of India and their British rulers.<sup>91</sup> The relationship between them could never again be what it was before 1918.<sup>92</sup> This whipped up anti-British feeling. When the custodians and the pujaris of the Golden Temple honoured the butchers who had perpetrated the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the entire Sikh community was cut to the quick. When the Indian National Congress was struggling to get their political rights, the Sikhs thought of emancipating their Gurdwaras. Undoubtedly,

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88. Datta, V.N., New Light on the Punjab Disturbances in 1919, Simla, 1975, p. 883.

89. *Ibid.*, p. 889.

90. Barrier, N.G., The Indian Archives, Vol. XXI, New Delhi, p. 14.

91. Raja Ram, The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Chandigarh, 1969, p. 174. The real number will never be known accurately. Rupert Furneaux in his book Massacre at Amritsar, p. 24 gives the official estimate of 1200 persons wounded whereas

*The Jaumi Rajniti*, Ludhiana, in its issue of May 1983 gave the number to be 1302 out of whom not less than 799 were the Sikhs.

92. Majumdar, R.C., Struggle for Freedom, Vol. XI, Bombay, 1969, p. 315.

the political situation prepared the ground for the coming struggle of the Sikhs against the government. All those Sikhs who were imbued with religious fervour, whether they were ex-Ghadrites like S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, S. Piara Singh of Langeri and S. Karam Singh of Jhingar or Congress workers like S. Chattar Singh of Kandhola and Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur<sup>93</sup> or active soldiers as well as ex-soldiers, like S. Kishan Singh Garga and S. Amar Singh of Dhariwal, jumped into the fray. After the Nankana carnage the weak-kneed policy of the Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, compelled them to launch the Babbar Akali movement. Thus, it was a militant part of the general Akali movement, which aimed at the reform of the Gurdwaras, free from the direct or indirect control of the government.<sup>94</sup> All those who did not subscribe to the policy of non-violence or were disillusioned with it after the failure of non-cooperation movement, more so with its withdrawal by Gandhiji after the Chaura-chauri incident, came into the fold of the Babbar Akalis.<sup>95</sup>

The Sikhs who had taken part either in the Ghadr movement or later in the Indian National Congress were drawn to the Gurdwara Reformation movement, due to their ardent love for religion and fervour for reform. It was the arena of the Gurdwara Reform movement which impelled them to organise

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93. Vide Interview of Pandit Durga Dass, Editor Urdu Weekly, Paigan-i-Wattan, and Manager Bari Doab Bank and Ex-General Secretary Congress Committee, Hoshiarpur (1921-30) told the writer that Dhanna Singh Behbalpur was the General Secretary of his village Congress Committee.

94. Sarwari, P.D., The History of the Struggle for Indian Independence, Jullundur, 1971, p. 77.

95. Vide interviews of Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, dated March 30, 1982, S. Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, f.n. contd..



Chakravarti Jathas, later to be called the Babbar Akali Jatha. Even some of the living Babbars concede that the atrocities at Nankana and Guru Ka Bagh turned them into militants. If some of the Babbars had Ghadrite antecedents there is no reason to link it in entirety with the Ghadr movement as such.<sup>96</sup>

The Babbar Akali movement was, in fact a Sikh movement in its inception and was the direct outcome of that religious zeal and passion which was ebullient to see the Gurdwaras liberated as earlier as possible. Even the Ghadr movement was the outcome of the Sikh ethos. It was, almost a Sikh movement.<sup>97</sup>

Bhai Pandhir Singh, stalwart of the Ghadr movement, himself conceded that the demolition of the wall of Gurdwara Rikab Ganj roused the ire of the Sikhs and the maltreatment of Koma Gata Maru Sikhs added insult to the injury.<sup>98</sup> He himself

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f.n.95 contd:

dated November 20, 1982, of S. Hardit Singh of Jassowal, dated September 8, 1982 and the statement of S. Shiv Singh Haripur dated October 4, 1983.

96. Bamni, M.S., Indian Martyrs, New Delhi, 1977, p.49. S. Kartar Singh of Pindori Nijran in his interview on 9th September, 1983, S. Surain Singh of Daulatpur in his statement on September 26, 1983 and Bhagat Singh Bilga, Secretary, D.B.Y.L., Jullundur vide his interview to the writer on 10th December, 1982, expressed the view that Babbars were inspired by the Ghadr movement. Despite this, the fact remains that a section of the Akalis thought of violent means only when Nankana Carnage had taken place.
97. Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, New Delhi, 1983, p.264.
98. Bhai Sahib, Bhai Randhir Singh, Jail Chithian, Ludhiana, 1981, p.506.



took part in an unsuccessful attempt to attack Ferozepur Fort on November 27, 1914 and was consequently arrested on May 9, 1915 and was gaoled for a long term of imprisonment till October 4, 1930, u/s 121(a) of Indian Penal Code in the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case. He called himself as the first prisoner of the Akali movement who fought for the Sikh right to lead life in the jail as prescribed by the Guru himself. Others like Baba Nidhan Singh of Chugha of District Ferozepur, Udham Singh of Kasel and Baba Wasakha Singh of Dadher of District Amritsar were of that tribe of adventurous heroes who combined religious fervour with radical politics and defied death with supreme scorn and courage. Those Ghadrites who remained outside the jail, like Karam Singh of Jhingar, S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur and S. Assa Singh of Phakrudī first joined the Indian National Congress but after the Nankana tragedy they took prominent part in the Gurdwara Reform movement. Subsequently, they became top-ranking members of the Babbar Akali Jatha. To conclude, it was the Gurdwara Reform Movement which might be considered to have been grown out of the Singh Sabha and the Ghadr movements<sup>99</sup> and not the Babbar Akali movement. It was the Gurdwara Reform movement which, in fact, proved a fertile soil for the formation of the terrorist groups, leading to the birth of the Babbar Akali movement in the Doaba.

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99. Walia, Romesh, Praja Mandal Movement in East Punjab States, Patiala, 1972, p.24.

The genesis of the Babbar Akali movement can be comprehended only if it is viewed as a resurgence of the Sikh spirit exhibited by the martyrs in the eighteenth century. The Gurdwara Reform movement was also a revival of that spirit and the Babbar movement was not only a continuum of it but also an efflorescence of the Sikh militancy. A brief survey of the Akalis right from the time of Guru Gobind Singh unto the present day will indubitably make us understand the Babbar Akalis from a correct historical perspective. Akali is one who is a worshipper of Akal<sup>100</sup> and all those who like lotus are above mundane life and live according to the will of supreme God and form the vanguard of the Gurdwaras, came to be called the Akalis.<sup>101</sup> The Akalis and Nihangs are synonyms and Guru Gobind Singh used Nihangs and Waryams (Brave) in the one and the same sense in 'Chandi di Var'.

The sect of the Akalis differs from all other Sikh orders in being a militant organisation. In their military capacity the Akalis were called 'Nihangs' and they played a considerable part in the Sikh history.<sup>102</sup> They combined warlike activity with the relinquishment of the world and became the armed guardians of Amritsar.<sup>103</sup> They alone among the Sikhs continued to wear blue chequered robes and steel bracelets ordained by Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>104</sup> During the Sikh rule they

100. Bhasa Vibhag, Punjabi Kosh, Vol.I, Patiala, 1978, p.35.

101. Bhai, Kahan Singh, Mohan Kosh, Patiala, 1974, p.36.

102. James Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, New York, 1959, pp.268-69.

Also vide Rose, N.A., A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Panjab and North-West Frontier Province, Vol.II, Delhi, 1983-p.9.

103. John Garret, A Classical Dictionary of India, Delhi, 1871, p.22.

104. Paynes, C.H., A Short History of the Sikhs, London, n/d, p.22.

challenged all those who showed laxity in religious affairs and even Ranjit Singh was reprimanded for his moral depravity. During the British period, the outrages committed by the priests or the pujaris within the Sikh shrines incurred the wrath of the Sikh community. Its newly awakened spirit found expression in a cult essentially reminiscent of the Khalsa's militant past. Thus appeared the political Akali on the stage of the Sikh national drama. Though the word 'Akali' lost its original significance to the general public it conveyed little meaning beyond membership of the Akali Dal, yet its inward inspiration was religious zeal.<sup>105</sup> All those in the vanguard of the Sikh struggle for reform in Gurdwaras came to be called Akalis.<sup>106</sup>

Those Akalis who advocated the use of weapons in defiance of the official Akali policy of non-violence came to be called brave (Waryam) or the Babbar Akalis. They followed the tradition laid down by the Tenth Guru and strongly believed that, "when all other means have failed, it is lawful to have recourse to arms". They were as religious as the Akalis though the Government doubted that they had any genuine interest in the religious side of the Akali movement.<sup>107</sup> They differed markedly from the Akalis in one respect. They came out openly against the Government, made seditious speeches, threatened

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105. Smith, V.M., The Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee 1921-22 (A Confidential Memorandum), Simla, 1922. (Reproduced in the Panjab Past and Present), p.279.

106. Caveeshar, S.S., The Sikh Studies, Lahore, 1937, p.226.

107. Reading Papers, (ms.) Eur.E238, Roll No.III, pp.168-69.

violent actions and became 'Chakarvartis' to avoid apprehension. Soon, they organised themselves into a group in the Doaba Bist Jullundur. Some places become so fused with the events taking place in them that their very names are charged with special significance. Quite rightly, the Doaba came to be associated with the Babbar Akali movement. Thus, the Babbar Akali movement which appeared on the scene in the Doaba was the outcome of the Gurdwara Reform movement.<sup>108</sup>

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108. Punjabi Kosh, Vol.IV, Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala, 1978, p.335.

It has been incorrectly mentioned therein that the Babbar Akali Jatha was a political wing of the Akalis and remained active during the World War I. In fact, the Babbar Akali movement took shape only after the Nankana tragedy.

### III

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MOVEMENT

No popular movement is ever started with the pre-determined aims. Every movement is like a trickle in the initial stage which changes into a stream and ultimately takes the shape of a river. The nature and the process of the movement too determine its aims.

The Babbar Akali movement had originated when the Gurdwara Reform movement was passing through a crucial stage. It was an off-shoot of the Akali movement.<sup>1</sup> The Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee were following the policy of passive resistance under the influence of Gandhi ji. The Panjab Government covertly supported the Mahants and that led to the bloody massacre at Nankana Sahib on February 20, 1921. The aim of the Gurdwara Reform movement was the ouster of the depraved Mahants in a pacific and non-violent manner. But the militants among the Akalis were disillusioned with it. They stood for avenging the Nankana tragedy. This was an embryonic stage of the Babbar Akali movement. The aim of the group was to eliminate all those who were trying to torpedo the Gurdwara Reform movement. At this stage

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1. Kotovsky, G., History of India, Moscow, 1979, Book 11, p.168.

they aimed to murder the toadies and procure the weapons so that the antagonists might be dealt with effectively.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, S. Kishan Singh Gargaj and others conspired to murder Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, Baba Kartar Singh Bedi, Mahant Basant Dass of Manak, Mahant Dewa Dass of Nankana, Messrs C.M. King and J.W. Bowring as they were supposed to be obstructing the movement for the reform of the Gurdwaras.<sup>3</sup>

According to a C.I.D. report, the militants aimed at creating a rising in the Patiala state, seeking the Bolshevik's help and inciting rebellion on the Frontier. They were also trying to foment trouble in the central Panjab, to procure weapons and to murder the enemies of the Khalsa Panth.<sup>4</sup>

In pursuance of this plot, Master Mota Singh crossed the Frontier. The militants also collected arms and ammunition and made attempts to murder the Mahant of Manak and Sardar Sunder Singh Majitha. They were planning to murder Mr.C.W. Bowring, Superintendent of Police, Lahore, when they were arrested. The arrest of the two of the conspirators at Lahore foiled their plan and their scheme fell like a house of cards. Then started the Akali conspiracy case in which 25 persons were implicated, out of whom 5 absconded, 6 became approvers, one died and 13 were tried. Out of the accused sent for trial

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2. Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, p.40.

3. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p.2.

4. Home-Political, File No.268/1922, p.6.



three were sentenced to 5 years each, while others were acquitted.<sup>5</sup>

The prominent members of this group were Master Mota Singh of Patara and S.Kishan Singh 'Gargaj' of Birring.<sup>6</sup> Master Mota Singh had left India in the second week of June, 1921<sup>7</sup> and Kishan Singh Gargaj also became fugitive from justice with the intention of forming a Chakarvarti Jatha with the following aims:-

- (i) to move about freely in the country and spread hatred against the government,
- (ii) to terrorise the loyalists and supporters of the government so that they might refrain from giving information about the movement and the activities of the Jatha,
- (iii) to stir up the peasantry and to seduce army, especially the Sikh portion of it.
- (iv) to collect money and procure weapons, and
- (v) To stage a revolution on lines similar to the mutiny of 1857.<sup>8</sup>

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5. The Akali, Lahore, 18 June, 1922, Also vide Home-Political, File No.268/1922,p.7.

6. The Journal of Indian History, Vol.I, Part II, August,1972. (R.K.Perti in his article The Babbar Akali Movement, p.496 mentions Karam Singh Daulatpur in the Akali Conspiracy Case of 1921, which is not correct).

7. Sadhu Singh Patara, Master Mota Singh Ji, Jiwani, Amritsar, 1970,p.143. Makhsuspari, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehor, Hoshiarpur, 1950, p.6, is not correct in stating that Master Mota Singh went to Kabul on May 31,1921.

8. Babbar Akali case Judgement,p.2.

Kishan Singh Gargaj was the moving spirit of this breakaway group from the Akali Party. He evaded arrest and whipped up campaign against the British rule. His first speech at Mastuana in June, 1921 clearly unfolded his plan of armed insurrection. He exhorted the audience to wield the sword.<sup>9</sup> Since then, he carried on a virulent campaign against the government. In November, 1921, the Chakarvarti Jatha was formed to achieve these aims. The Chakarvartis used the Akali and Congress stages and supported those movements as well. They extended a helping hand to the Akalis in capturing Kiratpur Gurdwara on 13th January, 1922,<sup>10</sup> though the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee disapproved forcible capture.<sup>11</sup> The cause of the Sikh Gurdwaras remained ever dear to them. At the time of Guru Ka Bagh morcha they offered all the possible help. Though their means were not appreciated by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee yet they carried on their activities to help the Gurdwara Reform Movement.<sup>12</sup> It was on March 19, 1922 at Sangowal diwan that they felt the audacity of the toadies and decided to remove their fear by acting boldly and adopt the following measures:

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9. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, Amritsar, 1970, p.52.

10. Ibid., p.7.

11. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.135

12. Paper Book, Babbar Akali conspiracy, Trial No.II,p.77.

1. to deliver warning to the toadies (2) to chop off their ears and noses if they failed to heed warning and (3) to arm themselves.<sup>13</sup>

They had to revise their objectives after the incident at Sundh where Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri and Arjan Singh of Sundh were arrested and Kishan Singh Gargaj narrowly escaped on May 11, 1922.<sup>14</sup>

The Chakarvarti Jatha headed by S. Kishan Singh created an awakening in the Jullundur area whereas the Jatha of S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur was active in Hoshiarpur. In August, 1922 both these jathas were merged and the Babbar Akali Jatha was launched in its meeting at Rajowal in the hermitage of Sant Thakar Singh.<sup>15</sup> The Babbar Akali jatha carried on a relentless programme and was able to incite hatred against the government. Its success made the government more cautious and the police more vigilant. Heavy rewards were offered by the government to arrest Kishan Singh, Karam Singh of Daulatpur and others. This, once again, compelled them to revise their objectives. In their meeting held at Jassowal on December 25, 1922, they decided to follow a programme of murdering the toadies.<sup>16</sup> This decision was approved by the

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13. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.68.

14. Ibid., p.72.

15. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.18.

16. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.96.

Working Committee on December 30-31, 1922 at Jassowal. The following decisions were taken:

- 1) The working committee alone was competent to decide when and by whom a particular toady was to be murdered. No member was to initiate any action arbitrarily.
- 2) In case a member comes across a toady, per chance, he should be murdered.
- 3) No valuables of the toadies were to be removed without the prior instructions of the working committee and the same be handed over to the working committee intact so that the amount might be used to purchase arms and meet the expenses of the 'Babar Akali Doaba'.
- 4) Neither the children of the toadies nor their women folk be touched during an operation against them.
- 5) Only those will be enrolled as members of the Babbar Akali jatha who perform their duty by giving up all other engagements on the call of the working committee.
- 6) The decision of chopping of the noses and ears was replaced by immediate and instant murder.
- 7) Every murder would be announced in the name of two or three Babbars in a special leaflet.
- 8) While the Babbars were forbidden to loot innocent persons, the property of the government, toadies and

notorious money lenders was considered legitimate for the cause.<sup>17</sup>

Kishan Singh Gargaj had steered the party clear of the murderous assaults. But after his arrest on February 26, 1923, the Babbars resorted to indiscriminate murders. Their object was to expel the British rulers by violent means<sup>18</sup> and they aimed to implement their revolutionary plan by collecting arms and stirring the army and the peasantry. They followed the Machiavellian principles and believed in the dictum: "Where there is hope only in arms, those arms are holy".<sup>19</sup> They staked everything for the realisation of their aim of serving the country and the Khalsa Panth. The money looted in dacoities was never used for personal ends.<sup>20</sup> They aimed at the expulsion of the British from India because they stood for the service of the country as well as the Panth.<sup>21</sup> The arrest of the leading Babbars irked them and they embarked upon the course of murders. They were conscious of the fact that their struggle was of a vaster magnitude. Their aim was not simply to wrest the Gurdwaras from the Mahants but also to liberate the country from the alien rulers.

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17. Ibid., pp.98-99. Also vide C.F. Isenonger's evidence in The Babbar Akali Conspiracy, Quoted in the Civil and Military Gazette, October, 31, 1923.

18. The Khoj Darpan, Amritsar, January 1982, p.104.

19. Machiavelli, The Prince, (Translated by George Bell) San Francisco, June 1925, p.185.

20. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.20.

21. Farvari, P.D., The History of Struggle for Indian Independence, Jullundur, 1971, p.77.

The study of the aims of this movement can be viewed properly only if literature of the Babbars is also taken into account. No doubt, much of that was proscribed and was not easily available. However, the residual obtainable literature is enough to give us a peep into their aims. The Home-Political series of the record at the National Archives of India, statements of the prosecution witnesses who were mainly hirelings and quislings; the government officials and the approvers focus our attention only on a part of the story and to rely entirely on them would be detrimental to the interests of both, history as well as the truth.

A perusal of the literature in the pages of the Gargaj Akali', the Akali-Te-Pardesi, the Babbar Akali Doaba and the Kirti demonstrate the aims of the brave Akalis. The writings of Master Mota Singh, S. Kishan Singh Gargaj, F. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, S. Hari Singh Khanda, Arjan Singh Sach, Banta Singh, Waryam Singh, Dhanna Singh, Nand Singh and many others bring into lime light the aims for which they laid down their lives. Master Mota Singh strove to awaken the masses and keeping this end in view, he absconded. He went to Afghanistan and the Frontier 'to study the political affairs and conditions there'.<sup>22</sup>

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22. The Panjab Press Abstract Vol. xxxiv No. 17, p. 496, dated November 26, 1921.



He advocated the election of the poor peasants and labourers for the Congress and the Akali organisations.<sup>23</sup> This was a pointer in the direction in which his mind was working. Though the religious and political aims were immediately emphasized yet under the indirect influence of the Bolsheviks, he gave his thoughts to the economic emancipation as well.<sup>24</sup> It was significant that he lashed mercilessly at the feudal aristocracy as well as the institutions of private property.<sup>25</sup>

Kishan Singh Gargaj, who was the Chief architect of the Babbar Akali movement enunciated the aims of the movement in his poems and letters very clearly. When he left army, he was an advocate of passive resistance like the Congress and the Sikh League.<sup>26</sup> His poems published in various issues of the Gargaj Akali supported this contention. He alluded to the martial nature of the Sikhs and suggested to the British rulers that it was in their interest to hand over the reins of the state which they had grabbed very unscrupulously.<sup>27</sup> He also exhorted the Sikhs to fight for the vindication of their religion and national honour and called upon them to go to the scaffold

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23. The Akali, Lahore, June 3, 1922.

24. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian Da Ithas, Delhi, 1972, p.468.

25. Narang, A.S., Storm Over the Sutlej, New Delhi, 1983, p.59.

26. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, July 31, 1922.

27. Ibid., February 28, 1922.

but never to seek forgiveness.<sup>28</sup> The liberation of the Gurdwaras was to be their avowed object and duty to look after their religious places was their inalienable and sacred birth right.<sup>29</sup> The historical events depicting the prowess of the Sikh heroes were recalled to develop and create strong antipathy against the British Raj. The pulling out of the 'keshas' of the Sikhs by the police during the Guru Ka Bagh morchha was galling and they urged the Sikhs to take up the gauntlet.<sup>30</sup> To the Babbar Akalis, the reform of the Gurudwaras was not a secluded issue. It was a part of the freedom struggle. Sucha Singh, Editor of the Punjab Darpan, was near the truth when he wrote, "If the Sikhs are obliged to resort to the passive resistance, they will do so not for the sake of Swaraj but for the Gurdwara Reform Movement."<sup>31</sup> The reason was summed up by Sardar Fardul Singh Caveeshar, when he wrote, "The Sikh knows that if his religion is safe, he can certainly regain the lost liberty of his country. A sikh wants to fight his country's battles from the vantage ground of his religion."<sup>32</sup> It was

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28. Ibid., April 14, 1922.

29. Ibid., April 21, 1922.

30. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, April 20, 1922.

31. The Punjab Press Abstract XXXIV No.18, May 7, 1921.

32. Caveeshar, Sardul Singh, Sikh Studies, Lahore, 1937 (reproduced in the Panjab Past and Present, April 1973, p.123).

not surprising that Kishan Singh Gargaj asked the Indians to take courage as the twaraj was near.<sup>33</sup> He also wanted freedom for the Khalsa Panth so that 'DHARMA' and 'TRUTH' are preached without any control or inhibition."<sup>34</sup> He was very sore at the honours doled out to the traitors and toadies by the rulers.<sup>35</sup> His appeal to the Maharaja of Patiala to beware of the underhand activities of his Prime Minister, Sir Daya Kishan Kaul, was not merely a poetic effusion,<sup>36</sup> but was rather based on the stark realities. The later events proved him right. Perhaps he was aware of the manoeuvres of Sir Daya Kishan Kaul to win over certain militants for the British masters.

S. Kishan Singh Gargaj was a staunch follower of Master Mota Singh. His arrest on 16th June, 1922 shocked him. He bemoaned the traitors who betrayed their heroes for a farthing.<sup>37</sup> He was fully conscious of the fact that his arrest would certainly take the Akalis away from their destination of controlling their Gurdwaras and getting such a bill passed which would give them full liberty in religious affairs. The Panjab Government passed a Gurdwara Bill in

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33. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, April 28, 1922.

34. Ibid, April 30, 1922.

35. Ibid, May 12, 1922.

36. Ibid, June 3, 1922.

37. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, July 10, 1922.

1922 but the Sikhs ignored it.<sup>38</sup> S. Kishan Singh Gargaj alluded to it when he wrote that the Sikhs had no faith in the Government and they were ready for civil disobedience.<sup>39</sup> These references showed that the militants had no programme to commit murders and dacoities. Kishan Singh, in a letter, rebutted the charge of murders and dacoities because he considered them against the principles of Sikhism.<sup>40</sup>

Though he advocated a hard line and openly threatened the toadies in his speeches and in the poems and Editorials of the Babbar Akali Doaba, yet he never took part in any violent action. His thoughts swerved gradually to the necessity of reforming the toadies who stood in the way of the Akali movement as the cause of the Panth was dear to him. When Pritam Singh, a disciple of Sant Mit Singh of Gurdwara Kishan Pura, complained against the duplicating of the Babbar Akali Doaba in the Gurdwara, Jathedar Kishan Singh is said to have admonished him and told him that the Gurdwara belonged to the Panth: he was doing work for the Panth and it was not for him to impede and obstruct him. In one of the poems printed in the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' at Kishan Pura, he also suggested in unequivocal terms to the Sikhs to

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38. The Sikh Gurdwaras and shrines Bill was introduced in the Panjab Legislative Council on April 5, 1921 for the first time. It was introduced again on November 7, 1922. Finally, it was introduced and passed on July 7, 1925.

39. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, July 20, 1922.

40. Ibid., July 31, 1922.

murder the British rulers. He wrote:

Meman Randian Kar Ke Kharo Sare,  
Goli Dushman di Chhati Jaro Sare. <sup>41</sup>

They resorted to the programme of murdering the toadies, when the situation became very critical and the toadies began to play with fire.

The poems which reflected the aims of the Babbar Akalis, were produced from a diary of the Babbars by the Crown Counsel, Mr. Pittman in the Court of Mr. L.A. Bull, Special Magistrate, Lahore. These poems exhorted the compatriots to kill the tyrants by wielding the sword and giving up the timid attitude of calling the British Government their ma-bap. The country men were called upon to act unitedly so that the country be liberated. <sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup>. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.615.

<sup>42</sup>. Vide the Akali, Lahore, December 9, 1923.

The following extract highlights the aims of the Babbars:-

ਬਾਉਂ ਬਾਈ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਜੰਗਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ , ਦੀਵੇ ਲਾਲਮਾਂ ਤਾਰੇ ਖਪਾਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ  
ਬੇਝ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਰਕ ਕੀਤਾ , ਸਿਰੀਂ ਲਾਲਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਖੌਰ ਪਾਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ ।  
ਦੇਸ਼ ਭਰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੁਖ ਦਿਤਾ , ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਾਲਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੋਟ ਲਾਹਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ ।  
ਹਿੰਦਵਿਚ ਪਾਪਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਦੇਵੇ , ਜਿਥੇ ਜਿਥੇ ਵੇਖੇ ਵੀਤਾ ਪਾਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ ।  
ਸਾਥੇ ਬੇਰੋਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੁਟੇ ਖਚਾਨਿਆ ਨੂੰ , ਖਤੇ ਲਾਹਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਧੁਮਾ ਧਮਾਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ ।  
ਕੌਮ ਦੁਸਰਾ ਕੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੁਰੂ ਕਰਨਾ , ਦੇਨਾ ਹੇਠ ਦੀ ਹੰਢ ਟਿਕਾਟ ਲਗ ਪਉ ।

The fifteen issues of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' also acquainted the people with their aims and objectives. These issues contained the poems and articles of Jathedar Kishan Singh Cargaj, S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Sunder Singh, Arjan Singh 'Sach' of Kharaudi, Hari Singh 'Khanda' of Chela, Labh Singh of Jassowal and Santa Singh 'Nidharak' as well as the resolutions and Declarations of the Babbar Akalis. Through the pages of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' they exhorted the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs to unite so that the traitors be extirpated. S. Kishan Singh in "Khande da geet" not only praised the Congress leaders like C.R. Dass, Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew and M.K.Gandhi and Akali leaders like Baba Kharak Singh, Sunder Singh Lyallpur, Sardul Singh Caveesher and others but also urged them to wield the sword.<sup>43</sup>

In the pages of the 'Babbar Akali', the Babbar stalwarts advocated the necessity of the violent means. Karam Singh of Daulatpur made it clear that the Babbar Akalis had abandoned passive resistance and decided to pounce upon, maim and mangle the toadies to pieces as if they were quails.<sup>44</sup> He also appealed to the Khalsa Panth to take the sword so that the 'Feringhee' be expelled from the country.<sup>45</sup>

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43. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.134.

44. Ibid., pp.37-38, Also vide Labh Singh, Jassowal, Sankhep Ithas Babbar Akali, Phagwara, 1962, p.66.

45. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy, p.226.



In one of the issues of the Babbar Akali Doaba the Khalsa Panth was asked to read the signs of the time and sing songs of liberty. Addressing the Khalsa nation, the issue reads: 'If you refuse to be awakened, the English will devour you. Without a violent struggle India will not be free. Non-violence has stirred the masses, but violence alone will bring the final victory' <sup>46</sup>

In the Babbar Akali's issue of 19th November, 1923, the Sikhs were asked to give up military service under the British Government. The paper wrote: 'If you still fight the Pathans for the sake of the English, I doubt, if you are a Sikh'. <sup>47</sup>

The Kanuni diary recovered from Babu Santa Singh further threw light on the aims of the Babbar Akalis and their real enemies, against whom they were fighting. The English were branded as the leech that had sucked the blood of the Khalsa. The Sikh Panth was asked to shake off lethargy and vindicate the honour of their faith. <sup>48</sup>

The Babbars were sore at the attitude of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee which was obstructing the work of the Babbar Akalis by withdrawing "sewaks". Though they resorted to stray murders in the beginning but they thought of entering into conflict with the English in the end to avenge

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46. The Tribune, Lahore, October 6, 1923, p.9.

47. The Tribune, Lahore, September 1, 1923, p.1.

48. The Tribune, Lahore, August 31, 1923, p.7.

the repression that was then being practised.<sup>49.</sup>

The aims of the movement had been specifically highlighted in one of the poems written by Dhanna Singh.<sup>50</sup> The Babbars came in the field fully armed because they were sick of the atrocities of the government. They were bent on settling the scores with the enemies. They hit the traitors hard and were not afraid of the dacoits even. They aimed at liberating the country. They chose the arduous path of reforming the toadies. All those, who stood in their way, were to be murdered. They were determined to expel the foreigners, kill the traitors, the toadies and the friends of the enemy and other wicked fellows. All this was to be done to achieve one purpose i.e. the freedom of the country.

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49. Loc.cit.

50. Babbar Goonj, San Francisco, June, 1925, p.5. (Quoted in Singal, D.P., Dr., Panjabī Kavita da Vikas, Ludhiana, 1970, p.191.

Babbar Akalian Da Dassan hal ji,  
 Kar Ke Khial Suno, Nau Nihal ji,  
 Gori Government Hathon Ak ke,  
 Aa Gae maidan Vich teg Chak ke,  
 Dushmanan Nun hath aapne Vakhaunge,  
 Hind Nun Azad Babbar Karaunge,  
 Phirde Jholichukan da Sudhar Karde,  
 Dakuan Kolon Nahin Mool Darde;  
 Mar Mar Goli Chhatian nun Parde,  
 Jholichuk jihre Baithe Vich aarde  
 Jinhe Desh Ghati Janan ton Makaunge,  
 Hind nun Azad Babbar Karaunge.  
 Babbar Kehande Hind Vichon Gore Kadhne,  
 Mittar Vi Dushmanan de Nahin Chhadne,

f.n.contd..

The Babbar Akalis were following the maxim of 'striking at the roots so that branches might wither away off themselves! Rightly or wrongly, they believed the toadies to be the pillars of the bureaucracy. To them the toadies were as dangerous as the foreign rulers.<sup>51</sup> They were part of the government machinery. To create terror among the British rulers and to compel them to leave the country, they resorted to coup de main on the toadies.<sup>52</sup> Banta Singh of Dhamian in one of his poems made it clear that the Babbars had launched 'a fight to finish' operation against the toadies. He wrote that they had put their hands on the trigger by the order of the Almighty.<sup>53</sup> Their purpose was the extermination of the toadies and to hurl defiance at the foreign rulers.<sup>54</sup> The toadies had been called 'bastards' whom no body could save from nemesis.<sup>55</sup>

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Karna Asad Hindustan Nun,  
Nahin Rehan dena Kise Beiman Nun,  
Viche Mar dene Jihare Sanun Hataun e,  
Hind Nun Asad Babbar Karaunge.

51. The Ait (Punjabi Daily), Jullundur, July 20 1980, p.1.

52. Sarwari, P.D. The History of Struggle for Indian Independence, op.cit., p.78.

53. Singal, D.P., Punjabi Kavita da Vikas (1901-25), Ludhiana, 1970, p. 191.

54. Loc.cit.

55. Babbar Goonj, Sanfrancisco, June, 1925, p.5.

The poem, illustrative of the determination of the Babbars, is reproduced below:

ਤਾਂਹ ਮੈਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਇਕ ਖੜਕ ਸੀਰਾ , ਘਸ਼ੋਲ ਰੜ ਲਿਖਾ ਹੋਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਘਟ ਕੀਰੇ ।  
ਸਿਰਾਂ ਪੜਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾੜੀਆਂ ਲਗ ਰਹੀਆਂ, ਫੇਲੀ ਬੁਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਲਲ ਬੁਟ ਲਾਟ ਕੀਰੇ ।  
ਬੰਤਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੋਂ ਮੇਰ ਮੇਰੇ, ਜਾਨ ਦੇਵਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੇਰਾਨ ਕੀਰੇ ।  
ਫੇਲੀ ਬੁਟ ਹਰਮੇਰ ਦੇ ਫੇਲਾਂ , ਹੁਟ ਲੇ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਹੂੰ ਘਜ ਹੁਟੇ-ਦੇਵਾਂ ।  
ਇਕ ਹੁਖਦੇ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੋਰ ਬੁਟੇ , ਚੰਡਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਦਾ ਸਿਰ ਵਜਾ ਦੇਵਾਂ ।  
ਬੁਝਾਵੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੁਟ ਰਹਿਣ ਨਾ ਰਾਹ ਦੇਵੇ , ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਜੋਗਾਕਾ ਰਾਜ ਦੇਵਾਂ ।

Assa Singh of Phakrudī, a prominent Babbar Akali, who, later on, turned approver also admitted that their aim was to expel the monkey-faced foreigners and murder them as they were responsible for their economic ills.<sup>56</sup>

Khan Sahib, Mir Fazal Imam, D.S.P., C.I.D. , Panjab, P.W.474 stated that their ultimate object was to subvert the British rule in India. The Sikh religion was also used as a means of inciting the people against the government. The object of the organisation was to malign the government by fair or foul means and intimidating the loyalists so that they might withdraw their support to the government<sup>57</sup> and refrain from supplying information against the party.

The aims of the Babbar Akali movement were specified by Rai Sahib Lala Bhagat Ram, assessor in the following words: "They tried to create disaffection against the government with the object of raising a rebellion, turning the British out of India and establishing the Sikh Raj in the province and Swaraj in India. This was the ideal or objective which they placed before the public. They wanted the public to believe that the British Government was tyrannical; it had been the cause of Nankana Tragedy, had taken away the

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56. Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy, pp.216-226.

57. Ibid., p.842.

keys of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and obstructed their efforts to take possession of and manage their Gurdwaras.<sup>58</sup>

Though the assessor had, by and large, correctly assessed the aims of the Babbar Akali movement yet the nostalgic references to the Sikh history by them misled him to believe that the Babbars were endeavouring to establish a Sikh Haj. What they aimed at, was the freedom to control their religious shrines. When they found that the government stood in their way, they worked for the liberation of the country as that would automatically emancipate the Gurdwaras. The struggle that ensued took a violent turn due to the nefarious activities of the loyalists and the toadies. Even the learned Judge agreed that the aim of the movement was to bring revolution in the beginning and it did not include the programme of murdering the toadies.<sup>59</sup>

Mr. J.K.M. Tapp, Additional Sessions Judge, who heard the Babbar case, also dwelt upon their aims. He brought out their objectives clearly when he delivered the judgement. He wrote that the Babbars had advised the Hindus, Mohammedans and Sikhs to unite and organise insurrection, wield the sword, behead the tyrants, burn and plunder police stations and treasuries and blow up the railway lines. The regiments

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58. Ibid., p.1072.

59. Babbar Akali Case Judgement, p.138.

were also invited to join and plunder the magazines."<sup>60</sup> Thus the perusal of the available Babbar literature, Babbar Akali cases, statements of the Babbars, approvers and the prosecution witnesses, crystalises the following aims and objects:

- (1) They aimed at liberating their country from the foreign clutches.
- (2) They wanted not only the 'Reformation' of the gurdwaras but also their control. They followed the footsteps of Guru Gobind Singh and did not do any thing against the cardinal principles of the Sikh religion.<sup>61</sup> It included avenging atrocities committed in the various Sikh shrines.<sup>62</sup>
- (3) They wanted to achieve these cherished aims by collecting weapons.
- (4) They aimed at murdering the toadies as the latter had helped the foreign rulers.
- (5) They advocated unity among the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.

Thus their aims were not different from those of the Indian National Congress, the Sikh league and the Akalis.

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60. Ibid., p.60.

61. The Akali Te Pardesi, March 6, 1925.

62. Arjan Singh Gargaj, Do Pair Ghat Turna, Delhi, p.26, n/d, p.26.



The difference lay in their means. They advocated with conviction the use of violent means whereas other parties followed non-violent non-cooperation with blind-folded loyalty. The aims and approach of the Babbar Akalis may be summed up in the words of Bawa Harkishan Singh: 'Babbar Akalis' was a group of Akalis who were in open violent revolt against the British—Babbar Akalis and we were poles apart. We were followers of non-violence. We had a very restricted aim and that was reform and possession of the Gurdwaras. They wanted to turn out the British from India.<sup>63</sup> Thus the movement was anti-imperialist, nationalistic and militant in its aims.<sup>64</sup>

A resume of the Babbar Akali movement clearly brings out the ups and downs of the changing situation, compelling them to change their objectives and shift their stand in accordance with the need of the hour. To start with, they stood for the reformation of the Gurdwaras in a non-violent manner. The repressive policy of the Panjab Government in support of the Mahants against the Akalis worked up their anger and in their propaganda tours they asked the people to revolt. When the informers and the British stooges posed a danger to them, they staked their all for their "Sudhar" — an euphemism for

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63. Bawa Harkishan Singh, Reminiscences of the Akali Movement, reproduced in Ajit (English) Weekly, May 21-27, 1933.

64. Babbar Akali case Judgement, p.132.

the extermination and liquidation of the Jholichucks.<sup>65</sup> They were, perhaps, convinced that non-violence would do them no good. Only violence would assist the establishment of a free government which was their ultimate aim.<sup>66</sup>

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65. Harbans Singh, Heritage of the Sikhs, New Delhi, 1983, p.279.

66. Home- Political, File No. 245 K.W /1926, p.132.

## IV

NATURE AND MODUS OPERANDI OF THE BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT

The Babbar Akali movement is an intricate and complex subject and so is its nature too. It emerged when the peaceful Akali struggle for the reform of the Gurdwaras was passing through a crucial stage,<sup>1</sup> and was consequently a sequel of the same. The Gurdwara Reform movement popularly known as Akali Movement, itself, was an off-shoot of the National Movement<sup>2</sup> and was running parallel to the Non-cooperation movement started by the Indian National Congress. In fact, it was acting like a yeast to it.<sup>3</sup> Even a cursory glance at the ends and the means of these movements will help us understand the nature of the Babbar Akali movement and view it through a proper perspective.

The Indian National Congress in its special session held in Calcutta on 4th September, 1920 approved and adopted the policy of progressive, non-violent non-cooperation until Swarajya was established.<sup>4</sup> Its goal was thus to achieve

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1. Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.113.
  2. Caveeshar, Sardul Singh, The Sikh Studies, Lahore, 1937. (Reproduced by Dr. Ganda Singh in The Panjab Past and Present, Vol.VII, Part I, April, 1973, p.119).
  3. Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, op.cit., p.22.
  4. Majumdar, B.C., Struggle For Freedom, op.cit., Vol.XI, p.333.

political emancipation through peaceful means. In contrast to this, the Sikhs, despite the influence of Gandhiji, found their main outlet in religious activities.<sup>5</sup>

V.M. Smith in his confidential Memorandum alluded to this when he stated that though the Civil Disobedience movement had found favour with the Sikhs, yet the Sikh movement was not allowed to come under the control of the Congress.<sup>6</sup> Sucha Singh, Editor of *the* "Panjab Darpan", wrote on 20th April, 1921 that "the Gurdwara movement is a purely religious movement and it has no direct relation with the Non-cooperation movement .... If the Sikhs are obliged to resort to passive resistance, they will do so not for the sake of Swaraj, but for the reform of the Gurdwaras."<sup>7</sup> Though P.O. Donnell, Deputy Commissioner, Campbellpore, in his letter to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Panjab viewed the Akali movement sui generis yet he also confessed that its aims were religious and not political and its leaders had, in fact, persistently denied that they had any political object.<sup>8</sup>

The Indian National Congress and the Akali movement struggled to achieve their respective goals with similar weapons.

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5. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.60.

6. V.M.Smith, The Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, A confidential Memorandum, Simla, 1922, reproduced by Ganda Singh, The Panjab Past and Present, Vol.I, Part II, October, 1967, p.265.

7. The Panjab Press Abstract, Lahore, 7 May, 1921, Vol.XXXIV, No.18, p.1.

8. Home Department, Political, file No.106/II/1922, p.7.

The Akali movement was launched by the Sikhs to liberate Gurdwaras from the control of the Mahants and the Panjab Government came in picture only when it backed the latter. The Congress objective of political emancipation was explicit and it was a challenge to the government. Both the parties followed a peaceful course and adopted non-violent policies.

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In contrast to these parties "The Sikh Babas strove to establish" an "Indian Raj" through violent means. Though they stood for the freedom of the Gurdwaras like the Akalis, yet the charge that they wanted to deprive His Majesty of his dominion in the Panjab to establish Sikh Raj was only to underrate their objectives. They waged a grim struggle to liberate the country and to achieve this they adopted terroristic tools.

The Babbar Akali movement was regional in nature. Its field of operation was a part of the central Panjab. Its bastion was the area lying between the rivers, Sutlej and Beas, comprising the districts of Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and the erstwhile State of Kapurthala. Though the adjoining areas of Ludhiana, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Lahore, Sialkot as well as the districts of Lyallpur, Gujranwala and the States of Malerkotla, Patiala and Sangrur remained a centre of their activities for a very brief period, yet the movement could not make any dent anywhere outside the Doaba.

9. The word Babar spelt with single 'b' by Caveeshar, S.S., The Sikh Studies, Lahore, 1937 and reproduced by Ganda Singh, Dr. in The Panjab Past and Present, Vol. VII, Part I, Patiala, April, 1973, p. 135 seems appropriate on more than one grounds but due to its long usage in the government records, I have spelt it with double 'b'.

The choice of Doaba Bist Jullundur as their base of operation was strategically very sound. The geographical position of the Doaba greatly helped the Babbar activities as it was full of rivulets known as 'choes'. These 'choes' prevented any effective implementation of police or military action as there were neither roads in the villages situated between the various streams nor the bridges and ferries to cross them. Besides, Siwalik range was composed of a chain of hills running from the north to south-east of Hoshiarpur District about 100 miles in Length and from 8 to 12 miles in width at various points, afforded a very safe shelter even for large bodies and was connected with the old tradition of the Khalsa.<sup>10</sup>

The movement was basically a Sikh movement. The Babbars glorified the wielding of the sword as the religious duty of the Sikhs. They followed the tradition laid down by the Tenth Guru:-

When all efforts to restore peace  
prove useless and words not avail,  
Lawful is the flash of steel then and  
Right it is the sword to hail.<sup>11</sup>

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10. Home Department (Political), File No.134/II/1922,p.9.

11. Guru Gobind Singh, Zafarnama (Ed), by Pandhol, G.S.  
couplet No.46, p.24.

The couplet is:

Chun Kar Az Hama Heelat-i-  
Dar Guzast,  
Halal Ast Burdan ba  
Samsheer dast.



It was the martial tradition of the Sikhs that nourished the Babbar Akali movement. The revolutionary character was the direct legacy of what Guru Gobind Singh had done to challenge the Mughal tyranny and here the Akalis followed in his footsteps caring little for their lives. Master Mota Singh, who was the precursor of the movement, Kishan Singh Gargaj, who was the leader and many others like Dalip Singh of Sadhara, Subedar Amar Singh of Dhaliwal, Udham Singh of Jandu Singha and Mula Singh of Bahawal and Karam Singh of Daulatpur were devout Akalis and had occupied responsible positions in the Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Master Mota Singh<sup>12</sup> was one of these 28 persons who were the elected members of the Interim Committee of Akali Dal, on April 4, 1921.<sup>13</sup> Kishan Singh Gargaj worked as Secretary of the Akali Dal. He was elected to that august office on April 4, 1921.<sup>14</sup> He was a dedicated and devoted Sikh. While still in army, he embarked upon the course of baptising the Sikhs. He propagated the principles of the Sikh religion in the Doab.<sup>15</sup> The service of the Panth was his

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12. Mussafir, Gurmukh Singh, Jiwan Birtant Master Mota Singh, Jullundur, 1923, p.49. Also vide Sadhu Singh, Master Mota Singh Ji (Jiwani), Amritsar, 1970, p.124.

13. The Akali, Lahore, 9 April, 1921.

14. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, Hoshiarpur, 1950, p.82.

15. Phul, Gurdial Singh, Choe Aje Nahin Sukka, Amritsar, 1982, p.114.

mission. No wonder, he is credited with an enrolment of 1400 strong Akalis.<sup>16</sup> Bhai Mit Singh of Kishanpura Gurdwara also corroborated this fact.<sup>17</sup>

The same is true of Dalip Singh of Sadhara, Jatheiar Nirvair Sewak <sup>h</sup>Saheed Jatha, Doaba.<sup>18</sup> Subedar Anar Singh of Dhaliwal was a military pensioner. He was the Jathedar of First Jatha of 101 military pensioners which courted arrest in Guru Ka Bagh morcha on 25th October, 1922.<sup>19</sup> He was also a member of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Similarly Udharn Singh of Jandu Singha, accused No.87 in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, was also a member of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee as well as the Akali Dal. He was one of the three members who represented Jullundur District in a meeting of the General Body of the Akali Dal, held at Akal Takhat on 27th August, 1922.<sup>20</sup> Mula Singh of Bahawal, who spearheaded the move to capture Gurdwara Anandpur Sahib and Gurdwara Kirat Pur Sahib also and took deep interest in the Babbar Akali movement. When the toadies were holding the pro-Government "Aman Sabha" near Dhanowali in 1922, Jathedar Kishan Singh alongwith the Babbars captured their stage and began to deliver his lecture therefrom. He was

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16. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, Phagwara, 1962, p.149.

17. Paper Book, Babbar Akali conspiracy, p.192.

18. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.2.

19. Vide S.G.P.C. Press Communique No.205, Quoted in Fahni, R.R., Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit., p.153.

20. Register Karwal Akali Dal, p.47.

guarded by Mula Singh of Bahawal and Karam Singh of Jhingar. Mula Singh was armed with a gun.<sup>21</sup> He was rightly called 'General' due to his dash and courage. He was one of the top-ranking members of the Akali Jatha, Hoshiarpur.<sup>22</sup> Similarly Karam Singh of Daulatpur, who was a returned emigrant, took 'Pahul' after the Nankana tragedy and led a Jatha to capture Gurdwara at Hothian in November, 1921.<sup>23</sup> It seems unnecessary to multiply instances. There is not an iota of doubt in it that the Babbar Akalis were genuine Akalis. They plunged in the Akali movement, due to their religious zeal. It is no wonder that the number of the Babbar Akalis conforming to the Sikh principles, precepts and practices was overwhelmingly large. Their dress, regular recitation of the sacred Sikh scripture, observance of Five (K's) Sikh symbols, regular morning regimen, faith in the 'Gurmata' and Ardasa in conformity with the basic principles of Sikh faith bring into sharp relief the true character of the movement.<sup>24</sup> They were genuinely interested in the success of the Akali movement; and to describe it merely a

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21. Dilgir, H.S., Shiromani Akali Dal, Jullundur, 1973, p.81. Also vide, Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.104-105, and 296.

22. Register Karwai Akali Dal, p.21.

23. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.216 (statement of Assa Singh of Phakrudī, an approver in the Babbar case).

24. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.21.

ruse-de-guerre is unjustified.<sup>25</sup> The movement was an upsurge to liberate the Gurdwaras. The use of the arms, was according to the Sikh tradition. Thus evolving out of the Akali movement, 'it was basically a religious enterprise'.<sup>26</sup> S. Nand Singh of Ghural, accused No.22 in the Main Babbar Conspiracy case, in a poem, written and recited at the time of his execution, clearly brought out to the fore this aspect when he said: "We have clung to the scaffold without any remorse as we remember Mati Dass's Saga of Sacrifice. We belong to the same tribe of the martyrs, our blood and flesh is part of theirs."<sup>27</sup> He also emphasized that the Akalis underwent barbarities at Guru Ka Bagh, Nankana and Gangsar with matchless patience and only the Sikhs of the tenth Guru avenged the atrocities by kissing the executioner's noose with unparalleled courage.<sup>28</sup>

The Public Prosecutor in the Babbar case also alluded to the character of the movement when he dwelt on Babbar courage

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25. Kamlesh Mohan, Dr.; Militant Nationalism in the Punjab (1919-35), (a Ph.D. Thesis), G.N.D. University, 1978, p.11. She has failed to comprehend the true character of the Babbar Akali movement.

26. S. Harbans Singh, Editor-in-Chief, Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, supported this view in his letter written to the writer on February 15, 1983.

27. The Gurmat Missionary, Delhi, March-April, 1982, p.20.

28. Ibid., p.21.

and determination to prove his charge by quoting Karam Singh Daulatpuri's views:- "The toadies have increased their activities due to the non-violence of the Akalis. If they are not given tit for tat, now, when will there be an appropriate occasion? We have given away our body and soul to Guru Gobind Singh at the time of initiation of Amrit. We are not afraid of death now."<sup>29</sup> Thus the goal was set for them and to achieve this goal they had to embark on a strong, stormy and ceaseless struggle.

The movement, no doubt, was violent as the Babbaras strongly believed that the British were ruling over India with might and force and therefore, they should be overthrown by force alone. They enrolled men of integrity and determination who were ready to sacrifice their all for the liberation of the country.<sup>30</sup> They doubted India's ability to become an independent nation if she fought with abstract weapons. The efficacy of Gandhian ahimsa as a weapon to liberate India was doubted even as late as 1945 by Mayor La Guardia of New York.<sup>31</sup>

V.M.Smith, S.P.(CID) Punjab in his confidential memorandum of February, 1922 alluded to the violent character

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29. The Akali Te Pardesi, December 20, 1924, p.7.

30. Comrade, Ram Chandra, Road to Freedom, New Delhi, 1980, p.34.

31. Pandit Y.L., The Scope of Happiness, New Delhi, 1979, p.193.

of the Sikhs. He considered even non-violent Akali movement more dangerous than the civil-disobedience campaign started by Gandhi ji.<sup>32</sup> The returned emigrants joined the Akali Dal and according to him, only a few of them had any pretensions to religious excellence. They had not forgotten Ghadr sacrifices and were waiting for an opportunity to show their mettle. In Jullundur District, where the returned emigrants were most numerous, they became the life and soul of the Akali movement.<sup>33</sup> To V.M. Smith the dividing line between the revolutionaries and the extremists was very thin. The returned emigrants had changed the complexion of the Akali movement.

The creed of non-violence was not even mandatory for the Sikhs. On the other hand they were required to be ever ready with weapons and to make their use. Even Gandhiji doubted their faith in non-violence as the final creed of the Sikhs "which I know, it is not."<sup>34</sup> Non-violent non-cooperation was devoid of any dynamic force and did not appeal to them in the least.<sup>35</sup> It was a revolutionary movement. An outstanding feature of a revolutionary movements

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32. V.M. Smith, The Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, A Confidential Memorandum, Simla, 1922, reproduced by Ganda Singh, The Panjab Past and Present, Vol. I Part II, p.298.

33. Ibid., p.297.

34. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, Amritsar, 1965, p.54.

35. Shaukat Usman, Historic Trips of a Revolutionary, Delhi, p.3.



is its emotive upsurge which is surcharged by the ideological inspiration rather than by mundane considerations.<sup>36</sup> The Babbar Akali movement was also the outcome of the passion for liberty - the joy of being able to think, to speak, to act and to breathe, without restraint. Really, there is no true revolutionary spirit without idealism and it is the cherished ideal which inspires people to sacrifice their all for the sake of their goal. The movement was the result of the religious convictions and longing for freedom. Without freedom, there is doom. Whendoom stares in the face, gloom engulfs even the bravest. But between doom and gloom there bloom some of the noblest specimen of humanity. God's choice has always fallen upon men who can wield arms with singleness of purpose. These men continued their heroic struggle against such heavy odds that no human calculations could normally hold out even a ray of hope for its success. It will also be appropriate to discuss whether their movement was terroristic or revolutionary in character. Terror is derived from Latin verb 'terrere' which means 'to cause to tremble'. Thus the word terror came to mean the action of causing dread. When terror is used for the good of the masses, it assumes significance. There are many instances of the individual terroristic actions where individual victims of terroristic assassination or mass murder were given preliminary warning that they were to die. The terrorists

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36. Jagjit Singh, The Sikh Revolution, Bahri Publications, New Delhi, 1981, p.247.

in such cases developed an explicit religious justification for killing the unrighteous and their camp-followers.<sup>37</sup> Thus, terrorism denotes the commission of outrages of a comparatively individual nature. The terrorist holds the belief that Independence can best be brought about by a series of revolutionary outrages calculated to instil fear into the British official classes and to drive them out of India. He commits other outrages for the purchase of arms, for the making of bombs and for the maintenance of his party hoping that the masses will be drawn to his support either by fear or admiration.<sup>38</sup>

The distinction of the revolutionaries from the terrorists is also very thin. Militancy is also a watchword of the revolutionaries. Revolution means a fundamental change in the form of the government of a country. It also means that the present order of things based on manifest injustice must change. It prepares the masses for the coming struggle to swoop and capture power suddenly. The revolutionaries aim to create an impression of power, invincibility and effectiveness, representing themselves as a force which must inevitably assume supremacy.<sup>39</sup>

37. Paul Wilkinson, Political Terrorism in India, London, 1974, p.46.

38. Terrorism in India (1917-36) (Compiled in the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India), Simla, 1937, p.1. Reprinted by Deep Publications, Delhi, 1914.

39. Paul Wilkinson, Political Terrorism, op.cit., p.125.

Revolution does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife nor is there any place in it for an individual vendetta. Revolution divorced of mass-action becomes terrorism. Terrorism is a phase, a necessary and an inevitable phase, in the revolution. Terrorism is not the complete revolution and the revolution is not complete without terrorism. Terrorism shatters the spell of the superiority of the ruling class and raises the status of the subject race in the eyes of the world because it is the most convincing proof of a nation's hunger for freedom.<sup>40</sup> The views of Bhagat Singh about revolution do not materially differ from those of the Babbar Akalis.

The Babbar Akali movement has all the features that make a movement revolutionary. It was an echo of the Sikh movement launched in the XVIII century, which, in itself, was revolutionary in character.

Revolutions are very destructive and brutal affairs. They crush all in their path.<sup>41</sup> The movement was imbued with all the revolutionary characteristics. The people were discontented with the existing conditions and the Babbars made them conscious of it. They resorted to terrorism and died a

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40. Thakur, Gopal; Bhagat Singh, The Man and His Ideas, New Delhi, 1962, p.45 (Quoted from, The Philosophy of the Bomb by Bhagat Singh).

41. John Dunn, Modern Revolutions, Cambridge, 1972, p.3.

heroic death. Their deeds are mirabile dictu. In the words of John Dunn, "a revolution happens when a set of revolutionaries with quite complex ideas succeed in arousing a vast majority of men already deeply discontented with the prevailing political order, a sufficient sense of their superior political and moral capacity to justify the masses in struggling to destroy the prevailing political order and to replace it with the political control of the revolutionaries. If what they bring about turns out to be an extended massacre, they end up with much blood on their hands."<sup>42</sup>

Any action, of course, is preceded by an idea. Whatever they did, they prepared the Doab people for that. Any social action presupposes the existence of an idea not only as its theoretical justification but also as an indispensable condition for its emancipation. Change is a complex process which can not be brought by words alone. It can be brought through people's practical revolutionary activity.<sup>43</sup>

The revolutionary activity came in clash with the government which was run on the basis of force and fraud. The Babbars tried to overthrow this type of government but did not succeed because they could bring consciousness only in a

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<sup>42</sup>. Ibid., p.15.

<sup>43</sup>. Kharin, Y.A., Fundamentals of Dialectics, p.46,  
Quoted in John Dunn, Modern Revolution, op.cit., pp.46 to 48.

small region.

The use of force was successfully applied in the past and it had met with approval, though only as the last resort, in winning political freedom. The Babbars were not blood-thirsty but were inspired by those high ideals which guided supermen like Guru Gobind Singh and heroes of history like Shivaji, George Washington, De Valera, Garibaldi, Lafayette and Lenin. The last one changed the face of the world and his country by resorting to arms.<sup>44</sup> The Babbar followed that tradition though they did not succeed. Failure does not diminish the glory of their struggle which was inspired by the noble and laudable ideals. The nature of the Babbar Akali movement, on the basis of the above distinctive features can be summed up as below:

(a) It was a Sikh movement. (b) It was launched by a group of revolutionaries who were the enthusiastic exponents of the Sikh cause. (c) It was spearheaded by the terrorists who made it a point to murder the toadies. (d) It was, largely, confined to one particular region.

The Modus Operandi of the Movement: The Babbar Akalis were a group of soldiers, retrenched from the army as well as serving and also some of the ex-Ghadrites who had taken an

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<sup>44</sup>. Majumdar, R.C. Struggle for Freedom, Vol.XI, op.cit., p.230.

active part in the Gurdwara Reform movement. Their sufferings at the hands of the British aggravated their anger. They hatched a conspiracy to kill all those responsible for the Nankana massacre.<sup>45</sup> Kishen Singh Gargaj and Master Mota Singh were the brains behind <sup>the</sup> movement. They collected weapons and two men, who were deserters from the 2/35 Regiment and members of the Akali Dal were deputed to murder those on the hit list. The scheme seems to have been ill-planned and crudely executed. Bela Singh and Ganda Singh were arrested at Lahore Railway Station on May 23, 1921.<sup>46</sup> Ganda Singh became approver and divulged the details of the conspiracy. This led to more arrests and finally three of them were convicted in the First Akali conspiracy case.<sup>47</sup> Five of the accused absconded. Kishan Singh Gargaj formed a 'Chakravarti Jatha' while Master Mota Singh went secretly to Trans-Indus region.

The failure of the action led to the change of the strategy. Though their methods were neither novel nor new yet they tried to learn a lesson from the past experience. The shift in the modus operandi was necessitated by the vicissitude of circumstances and was matched by the exigencies of the situation. In their case the motives and methods affected

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45. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit.,p.205.

46. Babbar Akali conspiracy, Trial No.II,p.3.

47. Loc. cit.



each other. As most of the Babbars were Akalis, and were deeply religious, they thought it prudent to propagate their views in the Gurdwaras and in the religious assemblies. It is relevant to point out that the main centres of the Babbars included Kutiya of Sant Kartar Singh at Pragpur near Birring, Gurdwara Kishanpur where Sant Mit Singh lived, Kutiya of Sant Thakur Singh at Rajowal, Gurdwara of Sant Gurbakhash Singh at Ghurial and Kutiya of Sant Charan Singh nee Faqir Singh at Jassowal. It is pertinent to mention that these places were the main centres of the Babbar activities. Pragpur was their Tehsil; Kishanpura Hospital; Panderi Nijjara Chief court; Jassowal High Court and it was at Rajowal where all major decisions were taken. Their appeal was immediate, instinctive and instant. They brought home to the masses, the ill-treatment of the Sikhs at the hands of the British. Kishan Singh Gargaj, who was himself a thunderous speaker, based his arguments on the Sikh history, traditions and theology. It was no wonder that starting from Mastuana in June 1921, he delivered 327 eloquent and exciting speeches till his arrest on 26th February, 1923.<sup>48</sup> His speeches made powerful and moving impact on the masses in the Doaba. This arousal of hatred and anti-British feelings created a volatile situation. His speeches harped on the vindication of religion.

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48. Labh Singh, Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.148.

In his oration at Mastuana, he said:

Brave is the person who fights for the faith, whatever may,  
And is chopped limb by limb and deserts not the battle  
array! 49

In another oration at Fatehgarh Sahib Sirhind,  
he eulogized the weapons in the following words:-

Thou art the Subduer of countries,  
The destroyer of the armies of the wicked  
in the battle field. Though greatly adornest  
the brave.  
Thine arm is infrangible. Thy brightness refulgent.  
Thy radiance and splendour dazzle like the sun.  
Thou terrifiest the evil. Thou scatterest  
sinners, I seek Thy protection.  
Hail ! Hail to the creator of the world,  
the saviour of the creation, my cherisher,  
Hail to thee, O Sword! 50

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49. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.49.  
Kartar Singh, p.w. 9 stated that Kishan Singh began  
his speech with the following couplet:

Sura So Pehchanie Jo Larre Din Ke Het,  
Purza Purza Kat Mare Kabhun Na Chhade Khet.

50. Nahar Singh, Asadi Dian Leharan, Ludhiana, 1960, p.301.

He was present at Fatehgarh Sahib Diwan in December, 1921.  
Jathedar Kishan Singh delivered a speech in the diwan  
which began with Tribhag chhand:-

ਘਰ ਧੰਨ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਖਲ ਚਲ ਧੰਨ ਖੰਡ ਰਣ ਮੰਨੇ ਸਭਾਜੀ ।  
ਹੁਜ ਦੰਡ ਖੰਡੇ ਤੇਜ ਪੁਰੀ ਮੋਰ ਕੀਰੀ ਭਾਨ ਪੁਰੀ ।  
ਸੁਖ ਸੰਤਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਦੁਖਮੰਤ ਚਰਦੇ ਤਿਲੋਬਖ ਚਰਦੇ ਖੰਡ ਸਰਦੇ ।  
ਜੈ ਜੈ ਜਗ ਕਾਰਣ ਸਿਸੁਟਿ ਉਭਾਰਣ ਮਮ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਦਣ ਜੈ ਤੇਰੇ ।

(Translation by Jagjit Singh, Sikh Revolution, New Delhi,  
1981, p.259).

**Master Mota Singh, Kishan Singh Gargaj and**

Karam Singh of Daulatpur made use of diwans arranged by the Akalis and conferences by the Congress leaders. Sometimes they spoke not only against the government but also condemned the weak-kneed policy of the national parties as well. They encouraged people to wear clothes of Khaddar and asked them not to cooperate with the government. They reminded the Sikh masses of their former sovereignty and made efforts to tamper with their loyalty. They were led to believe that the time had come to wield the sword against the enemies of the Khalsa Panth and reestablish the Sikh rule in the Panjab. The themes often reiterated in the village diwans and meetings dwelt upon the necessity of violence to expel the British rulers and establish Swaraj. The Babbar Akalis covered almost all the important villages in the Tehsils of Balachaur, Garhshankar, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Nawanshahr and Phagwara. Diwans were also held in some of the villages of tehsils of Kapurthala, Phillaur and Nakodar. The whole of the Doaba was practically humming with the diwans held by them. The participants in this movement involved in the different cases belonged to no fewer than 110 villages, whereas the people of more than 60 villages harboured the Babbar Akalis on various occasions.<sup>51</sup>

S. Kishan Singh Gargaj lashed at the British in a diwan held at Khuradpur towards the end of February 1922

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51. Makhsuspuri, S.S., op.cit., pp.295-297.

and asked his countrymen to unite to expel the British.<sup>52</sup>

In a diwan at Pindori Nijjara he again urged them to unite and launch a fierce struggle to drive out the British.<sup>53</sup> In

a lecture delivered in a diwan held at Shubiana he asked the people to arm themselves and advised them to be bold and

not fear the police.<sup>54</sup> In a diwan held at 'Charan ki Chhinj'

in October 1922 Kishan Singh Gargaj asked the people to arm themselves to carry on the struggle for freedom against the

foreigners.<sup>55</sup> In the same diwan Karam Singh Daulatpur urged

the audience in a poem recited there to take up the double-

edged sword to achieve freedom.<sup>56</sup> Thus, they freely advocated

the use of weapons and openly advocated violence. Master

Mota Singh and Kishan Singh Gargaj were doctrinaires of the

Babbar Akali movement. Their advocacy of weapons amounted to

their virtual worship.<sup>57</sup> But till the arrest of Master Mota

Singh up to June, 16, 1922, the 'chakarvarti Jathas' mainly

confined their activities to propoganda. Though they were

52. Babbar Akali Case judgement, 1925, p.14.

53. loc.cit.

54. loc.cit.

55. The Tribune, October 6, 1923, p.10.

56. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p.14.

57. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangharsh (Mss), p.46  
quotes the following couplet which Kishan Singh recited  
in his speech at Mastuana in June, 1921:—

Us Kirpan Khanda Kharag Tubak ur Tir,  
Saif Sarohi Seti Hamare Pir.

opposed to the Congress ideology of non-violence, yet they never came into conflict with them openly. Master Mota Singh declared frequently that he was against the Congress creed of non-violence but he never put his views into practice. Neither did he terrorise any government functionary nor did he kill any one like Devalera of Ireland.<sup>58</sup>

Kishan Singh Gargaj who during his itineraries as 'Chakarvarti' had carved out a place for himself by dint of his forceful lectures rebutted the charge of violence levelled against him.<sup>59</sup> This shows that till July 1922 even Gargaj was not very sure of the necessity of violence and its justification as a creed. As a tactical measure its application became exigent later on, when he declared in a diwan at Buhani in February, 1922 his desire to 'reform' the toadies.<sup>60</sup> After Sangowal diwan on March 19, 1922 intimidation of the pro-government and active supporters, was considered in an emergency meeting.<sup>61</sup> This heralded a change in their mode of operation.

During this period, the Babbars evolved a secret code of their own. They gave queer names to persons, places and things to dodge spies in the old tradition of the Khalsa. To them Patara was Mecca, Gurdwara Kishan Pura a Hospital,

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58. Musafir, G.S., Jiwan Birtant Master Mota Singh, Jullundur, 1923, p.213.

59. The Gargaj Akali, July 31, 1922, p.3.

60. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.66.

61. Ibid., p.68.

Jassowal and Pindori Nijjaran were called High Court and Chief Court respectively. In their colloquy 'cyclostyling machine' meant 'Baja'; 'murder' meant 'reform'; Imprisonment meant burying the dead leaving no clue about his fate. They called Pindori as Dopri and Bika as Kiba; to them pistol was pigeon and the cartridges were anklets. This code was very effective to keep their moves a close guarded secret. They coined their own pass-words as well, as was done in the army.

The programme and techniques of the Babbar Akalis underwent a change when the atrocious bureaucracy abetted by informers, caused a scare to them. During the Guru Ka Bagh moreha the atrocities resulting in the desecration of the Sikh Symbols, compelled different radical groups to come together and work unitedly under a common leader. To preach violence, a two-page leaflet was issued, on August 20, 1922. In the 15 issues of 'the Babbar Akali Doaba', readers were evoked to fight and die for their faith as such a person alone could be called a hero. Karam Singh of Daulatpur was its Editor to start with, but with the formation of the Babbar Jatha, Kishan Singh Gargaj became its de facto editor. The different issues of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' were brought out on the two duplicating machines called "Udaru" and "Safari" from different places to avoid police raids. Its chief printing centres were Gurdwara Kishanpura, Fatehpur Kothi, Jassowal, Kot Fatuhi and Pindori Nijjaran.



Dalip Singh of Gossal and Amar Singh granthi of Kot Fatuhi used to write on stencil papers and it contained the Babbar proclamations; poems and articles of Kishan Singh Gargaj and poems of Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Amar Singh, Piara Singh Granthi of Gurdwara Baoli Sahib, and Hari Singh of Chela.<sup>(62)</sup> Banta Singh of Dhamian, Waryam Singh of Dhugga and Dalip Singh also contributed poems.<sup>63</sup>

This paper asked the people of different religions to forge unity in their ranks, rise in revolt and wield the dagger to behead the butchers. It enjoined on them to "burn the police stations, plunder treasuries, place gunpowder beneath the railway lines, commit raids on the magazines, steal arms and sing songs of liberty."<sup>64</sup> The various issues of the Babbar Akali Doaba' invited regiments to join and plunder the magazines. Loyalists were referred to contemptuously as Jholiehucks, who were running about seeking rewards. The Babbar was invited to throw these in their faces. It was realised by now that non-violence was unsuited to the Sikh temperament. Its abandonment was urged and resort to arms was advocated. The Babbar was asked to concoct a hot drink which would counter-act the cooling mixture of non-violence.<sup>65</sup>

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62. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.91.

63. Vide letter of Surain Singh Babbar of Daulatpur to the writer, dated September 27, 1983.

64. The Babbar Akali Doaba, August 24, 1922, quoted in the Tribune, 3 October, 1923.

65. Babbar Akali case judgement, p.60. Also vide Home Political file No.245, k.v.1926.

The programme of seduction of soldiers and stirring the peasantry went on working satisfactorily till the loyalist began to trouble the Akalis. Then 'the Babbar Akali Jatha' was formally launched in August, 1922 and Kishan Singh Gargaj was elected Jathedar in the Kutiya of Thakar Singh of Rajowal.<sup>66</sup>

The programme of chastising the toadies pondered over at Sangowal on March 19, 1922 was continued upto December, 1922. During this period more and more radical Akalis joined the Babbar ranks. They asked Zaildars, Lambardars, Fufedposhes and police officials to desist from spying and toadying. Earlier, Kishan Singh had advised restraint and caution in reforming the toadies when Assa Singh and Dalip Singh of Sadhara sought his views at Basiala.<sup>67</sup> Till then, an assault on Fufedposh Harnam Singh of Mehdipur on May 20, 1922 and a robbery of Ram Ditta nee Kaka Lambardar of Bachauri on July 3, 1922 were the only incidents of the Babbar violence.

They changed their strategy after their two meetings, held at Jassowal on December 25 as well as on December 30-31, 1922. They decided to follow the policy of open confrontation. The Babbars were asked to take vow that every member would have to murder a jholichuck, even if he were his father.

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66. Makhsuspuri, F.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.87.

67. Ibid. , pp.81-82.

Every member would have to fight against the enemy, though he might be alone, a member betraying or deserting the Jatha, turning approver or working as a C.I.D. agent would be shot dead and his house would be burnt with petrol.<sup>68</sup>

This change in the Babbar strategy was necessitated to ward off the danger of the loyalists and avaricious persons as a result of the official proclamation of November 30, 1922 which promised lucrative rewards for the apprehension of the Babbar leaders. The awards ranged from Rs. 250/- to Rs. 2000/-. The highest reward was for the arrest of Kishan Singh Gargaj.<sup>69</sup> The campaign of murders and dacoities was launched with the abortive attempt on the life of Arjan Singh Patwari, because he was alleged to be instrumental in the arrest of Master Mota Singh.<sup>70</sup> The Panjab Government, which so far considered it a law and order problem, became conscious of the real situation.<sup>71</sup>

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68. Babbar Akali Conspiracy - Trial No. II of 1924, pp. 12-13. Also vide Home-Political File No. 134/II/1923.

69. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Ithas Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p. 109.

The rewards announced for the apprehension of the Babbars were as under:

Kishan Singh Gargaj	-	Rs. 2000/-
Karam Singh Daulatpur	-	Rs. 1000/-
Karam Singh of Jhingar and		
Dalip Singh of Gossal	-	Rs. 500/- each
Assa Singh of Phakrud	-	Rs. 250/-

70. Home-Political, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 75.  
(Extract from a letter from Viceroy of India, Lord Reading to the Secretary of State).

71. loc.cit.

The Babbars carried on their programme relentlessly. A dacoity was committed at Jadla on February 2, 1923. Bishan Singh Zaildar of Rani Thua was murdered on February 10, 1923. Another murder committed was that of Diwan of Hayatpur on 13th February, 1923.

With Kishan Singh's arrest on February 26, 1923, the Babbars became very furious and ferocious. They were seething with rage. They made three attempts to murder Labh Singh of Dhada Fateh Singh on March 14, 17 and 23, 1923 because he was mainly responsible for Kishan Singh's arrest. On March 3, a dacoity was committed at the Railway Station of Jamser. Then the murders of Buta Lambardar of Mangal Shamman and his grandson took place on March 11, 1923 to be followed by that of Labh Singh Mistri of Garhshanker on March 19, 1923 and of Hazara Singh Lambardar of Behbalpur on March 27, 1923. Subedar Genda Singh of Ghurial was shot dead in front of his house on 17th April, 1923 in Jullundur District. These murders created an alarm in the districts of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur. A large number of village officials and other loyalists threatened to resign their jobs.<sup>72</sup>

The government made frantic efforts to eliminate the Babbars. It conducted simultaneous raids in 39 villages on 23rd March, 1923 and on the basis of those raids, large-scale arrests were made on April 21-22, 1923.

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72. loc.cit.

The Babbars, in their anxiety to save the innocent villagers from the barbarities of the police, disclosed their names in the Babbar leaflets, owning the responsibility of these murders. It put the government on guard and immediately it began to hunt them down. Though the Babbars, once again, surprised the official circles by swooping on Ralla and Dittu like guerillas on May 23, 1923 at Kaulgarh, yet their terror began to wane. The arrival of the troops in the Doaba and bi-weekly flights of aeroplanes scattering propaganda leaflets had heartened and encouraged the toadies. After the proclamations of 25th April, 1923<sup>73</sup> and of August 8, 1923<sup>74</sup> the insiders and relatives lost heart and allured by the rich towards, turned traitors. In this tentacle were caught some of the fine heroes at Babeli,<sup>75</sup> Munder,<sup>76</sup> Mannanhana<sup>77</sup> and

73. Makhsusuri, F.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.201-203.

74. Ibid., p.227. Karam Singh of Daulatpur carried the highest reward of Rs. 3000/- while Udey Singh and Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur carried a reward of Rs. 2000/- each, Banta Singh, Dalipa Dhamian and Waryam Singh carried a reward of Rs. 1000/- each. The reward for the arrest of Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass and Anup Singh of Manko was Rs. 500/- each. It was Rs. 400/- for the arrest for Bishan Singh Mangat and Rs. 250/- for that of Bata Singh of Pindori Nijran.

75. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Udey Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian, Bishan Singh of Mangat and Mohinder Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh were killed at Babeli on September 1, 1923, in an encounter with the police.

76. At Munder, Banta Singh of Dhamian, Jawala Singh of Fatehpur Kothi fell martyrs, while Waryam Singh of Dhugga escaped, on December 12, 1923.

77. Dhanna Singh exploded a bomb while in police custody. He was killed in the blast alongwith his captors on October 25, 1923.



Chak No. 54<sup>78</sup> in Lyallpur. But the Babbars, true to their name, fell martyrs in a truly heroic tradition. Rightly, the brave man falls, he cannot yield. They were killed but their unyielding spirits remained unvanquished.

The Babbar movement made full use of the techniques of the Akali movement. To begin with the Babbars devoted their energies to create an awakening among the people in the rural areas by holding diwans and political conferences. In these diwans appeal to the religious feelings of the Sikhs was made and the people were incited not to cooperate with the government. In this regard the diwans held at Haripur, Buhani, Sangowal, Ghural and Anandpur added to the Babbar prestige whereas the conferences of Kot Fatahi, Burka Kalan and Khuradpur broke fresh grounds. The whole of the Doab began to hum with the religious ardour, and patriotic fervour. The Babbar propaganda had really cast a magical spell on the people.

When it became difficult to give their message in conferences and diwans, they brought out the Babbar Akali Doaba Akhbar." To overcome financial difficulties, dacoities were resorted to. The Babbars began to gather strength in Doaba enormously. On the other hand, the government lured the toadies. To meet this fresh danger, the Babbars issued them

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78. Waryam Singh Dhugga was shot dead on June 8, 1924.



warnings, threatened their social boycott. Ultimately the toadies had to be castigated, chastised and some of them were even murdered. This brought them into open confrontation with the government. They fell martyrs to a cause dear to them and did not flinch from their goal. They sacrificed their all at the altar of their principles without any murmur but did not budge an inch from the stand they had taken as the true soldiers of the faith they lovingly espoused.

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## V

THE AKALI MILITANCY AND FORMATION OF THE  
CHAKARVARTI JATHAS

The harrowing tragedy at Nankana Sahib<sup>1</sup> gave a new turn to the Akali Movement. This uncalled-for barbarity aroused the anger of the Sikhs and the militants, among them, began to think of taking revenge. The Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee were following the non-violent policy under the influence of Gandhiji. On 6th March, the S.G.P.C. passed a resolution, brought by Master Mota Singh, which advocated non-cooperation with the government in martyr's case. Since then, the Gurdwara Reform movement became political in its perspective. The Panjab Government began to intimidate the eminent Sikh leaders on one pretext or the other. Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar, S. Teja Singh of Buchar, S. Lakha Singh Kural and many others were arrested on March 11 and 12, 1921.<sup>2</sup> The Congress leaders like Gandhiji exhorted the Sikhs, even, to pardon those responsible for

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1. The Panch, Lahore, February 23, 1923, gives the number of the martyrs at Nankana Sahib as 200. Also vide, Amar Singh, Sikh Panth Kithon Ton Kithe, Amritsar, 1970, p.287. Gurbakhash Singh Shamsheer, Shahidi Jivan, op.cit., p.573, gives the number of the Sikhs killed as 86, whereas the Panjab Government in its communique of February 27, 1921, conceded the figure to be 130 (Quoted in The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, October 23, 1921). The number given in Kartar Singh Jhabbar's Saka Nankana Te Dusre Gurdwarian De Kabge Lain De Hallat (Mss.), p. 112, is 150 only.

2. Narain Singh, Akali Morehe Te Jhabbar, Delhi, 1967, pp.133-34.

Nankana outrage on March 3, 1921 in a speech at Nankana Sahib and reiterated the views, in a message on 5th March, 1921. This was not relished by the Akali leaders from the Bist Jullundur Doab. There was a spate of meetings and divans where fiery and inciting speeches were delivered. Master Mota Singh, Bhai Kishan Singh Gargaj and many others were in the vanguard. The revolutionary songs were recited in the meetings. The people welcomed this commotion and in order to invite all for participation, enthusiastic youngmen gathered into groups and visited as many villages as possible. This filled the Doaba villages with ardour and the masses began to expect big events. The Doaba burst into revolutionary fervour.<sup>3</sup> A big diwan was held at Kot Fatuhi from 9th to 11th March, 1921, and was addressed by many leaders of note.<sup>4</sup> On March 18, 1921, a political conference was held at Rurka Kalan (Jullundur). Master Mota Singh addressed the gathering, in which he thanked Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Shaukat Ali for their sympathy with the Sikhs over the Nankana outrage, but he also squarely expressed dissent and disagreement with the Gandhian view-point of granting pardon to the butchers of the Sikhs at Nankana.<sup>5</sup> In his speech he made mention of ten Mahants of the shrines of the Sikhs who had become tool of the British bureaucracy in tormenting

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3. Comrade, Ram Chandra, Road to Freedom, New Delhi, 1980, p.34.

4. The Panth, Lahore, March 9, 1921.

5. The Panth Sewak, Amritsar, March 30, 1921.

and hunting down Kona Gata Maru passengers of 1914-15.<sup>6</sup>

Germination of the Conspiracy: Under these circumstances, the militant Akalis met in a conclave at the time of the XIII Sikh Education Conference held at Hoshiarpur from March 25 to 27, 1921.<sup>7</sup> It was here that a nebulous terrorist group was formed with a resolve to assassinate the persons responsible for the Nankana holocaust.<sup>8</sup> The group included Master Mota Singh,<sup>9</sup>

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6. Loc. cit.

7. Charan Singh, The Work of Sikh Education Conference, Amritsar, 1944, p.26 and The Akali, Lahore, March 31, 1921, p.4. The date of the conference from March 19 to 21, given by Bahar Singh, Asadi Dian Lehar, Ludhiana, 1960, p.300, and followed by Makhsuepuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.6; Satya, M. Rai, Panjabī Herole Tradition, op.cit., p.7 and Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.114 is incorrect and has not been substantiated by any contemporary source.

8. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.205.

9. Master Mota Singh was born at Patara in 1881. He was one of the founder members of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. He was a forceful speaker who carried away the masses with him. He had little faith in Gandhian non-violence. His arrest warrants were issued for his involvement in the First Akali conspiracy. He became Chakarvarti. He succeeded for a considerable time in evading the police but was ultimately arrested on 16th June, 1922. He remained in Jail during the Babbar Akali movement. He was released on June 23, 1929 (vide the Kauni Babbar Sher, Amritsar, 28 June 1929). Even in jail, he kept contact outside, especially with the leaders of the Babbar Akali movement. When he came out of the jail, the movement had been crushed. He joined the Communist Party of India and became an important member of Kishan Sabha. Later, on he joined the Indian National Congress and was also elected an M.L.A. on its ticket. He breathed his last on 9 January, 1960.

Kishan Singh Gargaj,<sup>10</sup> Jagat Singh alias Bijla Singh of Gharuan<sup>11</sup>, Amar Singh of Delhi, Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan,<sup>12</sup> Tota Singh Peshawari,<sup>13</sup> Ganda Singh, Bela Singh of Gholia Khurd,<sup>14</sup> Sham Singh

10. Kishan Singh Gargaj was born in Birring in 1891 and was the only son of S. Fateh Singh. He was Havaladar Major in 2/35 Sikhs. During martial law days, he was detained for 28 days for anti-British remarks. He was discharged and a pension of Rs. 22/- was forfeited due to his alleged disloyalty. On April 6, 1921, he became Secretary of the Akali Dal. After XIII Sikh Education Conference held at Noshiarpur, he hatched a conspiracy to murder J.W. Bowring and others. The failure of the conspiracy led to his arrest warrants. He became Chakarvarti and launched a "Chakarvarti Jatha" to create an awareness among the people of the Doaba against the British rulers.
11. Bijla Singh of Village Gharuan belonged to Patiala State. It falls in Ropar District, now. He was a close companion of S. Kishan Singh. He was with him at Fatehgarh Sahib, Sirhind.
12. Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan (District Gujjaranwala) served in 2/35 Sikhs along with S. Kishan Singh. He also acted as an Assistant Secretary Akali Dal, vide Home/Political File 268/1922, p.6. Also statement of Amar Singh, P.W.S. vide Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, pp.40-42.  
Dr. Karlesh Mohan is not correct when she says that Amar Singh replaced Kishan Singh when the latter absconded in April 1921 (Militant Nationalism in the Punjab, 1919-35a, Ph.D. Thesis (Unpublished), G.N.D.U., Amritsar, p.74). Kishan Singh absconded in June, 1921. Amar Singh was acquitted as he turned an approver. Then he began to reside at Kot Fathah and worked as Granthi in the Gurdwara there. He began to work actively for the Babbar Akali Jatha but once again he turned approver and his statement led to many arrests.
13. Tota Singh Peshawari was the first Secretary of the Akali Dal. He handed over his charge to S. Kishan Singh on April 6, 1921 (vide the Babbar Sher, Amritsar, February 26, 1926). He has been mentioned as a former Assistant Secretary of the Akali Dal, vide Home Political file No. 268/1922, p.6. He was an active Akali who helped Master Mota Singh in escaping to Trans-Indus region in June, 1921. He was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment due to his complicity in the First Akali conspiracy case. He was released on February 18, 1926.
14. Nahar Singh, Agadi Dian Lehra, op.cit., p.299 and Sant Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, Kishan Pura, 1954, pp.1011 and 1311. Bachan Singh of Gholia Khurd an ex.M.L.A.

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and Battan Singh of Kahirī,<sup>15</sup> Bachittar Singh and Sadhu Singh of Dhuri, Bishan Singh of Sherpur, Gurbachan Singh of Ambala,<sup>16</sup> Chatter Singh of Sheikhupura, Shankar Singh of Pindori Bibi, Chanchal Singh of Jandiala, Narain Singh of Chattiwind and many others. Kishan Singh was a devout Sikh who had been baptising the Sikhs since 1915 in the Doaba.<sup>17</sup> At the time of the Ghadr Movement, he was drawn to Bhai Randhir Singh and exchanged news about Ghadr activities through Sant Singh who was staying with Bhai Randhir Singh.<sup>18</sup>

But the Movement failed. Kishan Singh was very sore at its failure and seriously pondered over the programme of murdering informers and traitors who had stood witness against the returned emigrants from Canada and to realise his objective he planned to procure weapons.<sup>19</sup> S. Kishan Singh, Amar Singh, Narain Singh, Ganda Singh and Bela Singh were serving 2/35 Sikhs at Ambala in November, 1920. After the Mankana tragedy, some left service or were discharged while others absconded after stealing weapons from the armoury of Air Force at Ambala.

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14 contd:

also threw light on Bela Singh's involvement in the conspiracy to the writer in an interview on 11.4.1983, shortly before his death.

15. Battan Singh of Kahirī: He was an ex-Ghadrite who became one of the important members of the Akali Dal.

16. It is a village in Hoshiarpur District not to be confused with Ambala, a district headquarter in the State of Haryana.

17. Phul, Gurdial Singh, Choe Aje Nahin Sukka, Amritsar, 1982, p.114.

18. Mahar Singh, Anadi Dian Lebran, op.cit., p.299.

19. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.40.



The meeting at Hoshiarpur was the first sod towards the formation of the militant base. The militants among the Akalis discussed their strategy, for the first time, there.<sup>20</sup> It was decided to collect weapons and use military personnel sympathetic to the Sikh cause. In pursuance of this decision, steps were taken. Tota Singh Peshawari was assigned the duty of collecting weapons. Chatter Singh was detailed to arrange money for the purpose.<sup>21</sup> Jagat Singh and Gurbachan Singh were sent to Peshawar to get into communication, through Tota Singh, with General Nadir Khan at Jalalabad in order to ascertain whether Master Mota Singh and his companions would be handed over to the British Government in India if they crossed the Frontier. Communication was established and an assurance was received that no such action would be taken.<sup>22</sup> From April 4 to 6, 1921, the Sikhs assembled at Nankana Sahib to celebrate 'Martyr's Day'.<sup>23</sup> At that time an Interim Committee of 28 members was constituted, which included Master Mota Singh, to deal with the situation which prevailed at that time.<sup>24</sup> Kishan Singh Gargaj also made his debut with a speech full of religious fervour and was instantaneously elected Secretary of the Akali Dal.<sup>25</sup> He took

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20. Makhsusari, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.46.

21. He was son of a military Captain and had become Jathedar of Tarantaran after Nankana tragedy, Vide The Akali, June 18, 1922.

22. Home-Political Department, File No.263/1922, p.6.

23. Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.109.

24. The Akali, Lahore, April 9, 1921.

25. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, July 31, 1922. Milkha Singh's account, Babbar Akali Lehar Da Mudh, vide the Panjabi Tribune,

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charge on 6th April, 1921 with his headquarters at Guru Ka Bagh, Amritsar. On April 9, 1921, the Militants assembled at Amritsar in the office of the Akali Dal and decided to kill the atrocious Mahants and others. The weapons purchased were to be kept with Kishan Singh Gargaj in the office of the Akali Dal. Again, a meeting is said to have taken place on May 1, and then on May 21, 1921.<sup>26</sup> The last meeting was attended by Master Mota Singh, Kishan Singh, Tota Singh, Harain Singh, Ganda Singh, Bela Singh, Bishan Singh of Sherpur, Bijla Singh, Gurbachan Singh, Amar Singh of Delhi, Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan and some others.<sup>27</sup>

Accordingly it was decided that Mr. C.M. King Commissioner, Lahore Division,<sup>28</sup> who, it was alleged, encouraged the Mahants to put up resistance against the reformers,<sup>29</sup> J.W. Bowring, a C.I.D. official who had been supposed to be hostile to the aspirations of the Sikh community,<sup>30</sup> Mahant Deva Dass of Nankana, Mahant Basant Dass of Manak, Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia and Baba Kartar Singh Bedi be assassinated.<sup>31</sup>

25 contd:

Chandigarh, dated 13 June, 1982 is erroneous wherein he states that Gurdit Singh of Kamagata Maru fame was present at that time at Nankana Sahib. Baba Gurdit Singh had decided to offer himself for arrest at Nankana Sahib on 15th November, 1921 on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi and not in April, 1921 (vide Sadhu Singh, Jivani Master Mota Singh 11, op.cit.p.126).

26. The Akali, Lahore, June 18, 1922.

27. C.I.D. Report Home-Political File No.268, 1922.

28. Dr.Kamlesh Mohan, The Journal of Regional History, Amritsar, 1980, Vol.I, p.145 has inaccurately described him, Commissioner of Jullundur Division. Also incorrect is Milkha Singh, when he stated in his Babbar Akali Lehar (Mas), pp.29-34 that C.M.King was Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhupura. Actually, Mr.J.C.Currie was Deputy Commissioner of Sheikhupura at that time.

29. Ganda Singh, A Brief Account of the Sikh People, Amritsar, p.84.

30. Sahni, Ruchi Ram, Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines, op.cit.p.66.

31. Babbar Akali case. Judgement, Trial No.II, p.1.

Tota Singh was deputed to procure weapons from the Frontier<sup>32</sup> and he was able to get revolvers, bombs and cartridges with the assistance of Sant Singh alias Chatter Singh, Sham Singh of Kahiri and Gurbachan Singh.<sup>33</sup> They succeeded in depositing the weapons on 30th April, 1921, in the office of the Akali Dal, at Amritsar.<sup>34</sup> Seven revolvers had already been stolen from the armoury of the Air Force of Ambala Cantonment in December, 1920.<sup>35</sup> Ganda Singh, Bela Singh and Bur Singh planned to commit a theft of the weapons but they did not succeed. After some days, Bela Singh, single-handedly, broke open the rear window and stole 7 revolvers and three rifles. Later on, Bela Singh and Ganda Singh absconded with four revolvers leaving three with Narain Singh Naik of 2/35.<sup>36</sup>

Bela Singh of Gholia Khurad and Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan were deputed to account for the Mahant of Manak, but the attempt failed as there was a police guard posted at the Gurdwara. Amar Singh of Delhi and Ganda Singh were deputed to throw bomb at Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, but they returned unsuccessfully owing to Majithia's absence from the house.<sup>37</sup> Finally, Ganda

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32. The Akali, Lahore, June 18, 1922.

33. Loc.cit.

34. Loc cit.

35. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, p.2.

36. Paper Book Babbar Akali case, p.860.

37. Ibid., p.40.

Singh and Bela Singh were deputed to assassinate Mr. J.W. Bowring. They were sent to the office of the 'Akali', Lahore, on the direction of Bijla Singh with an introductory letter to one Sadhu Singh.<sup>38</sup> They met Sadhu Singh and Chatter Singh of Jethuwal on May 21, 1921, Sadhu Singh took them to a granthi, named, Prem Singh of Gurdwara Chumala Sahib on 22nd May, 1921 he remained busy in making certain arrangements and on 23rd he took Bela Singh and Ganda Singh to Bowring's bungalow. They failed to find him there. Then Sadhu Singh advised them to murder him at Amritsar where he was scheduled to go that evening as told by Bowring's cook, Nizam-ud-din.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, they left for Lahore railway station to board the train leaving for Amritsar. It seems that Sadhu Singh being an informer, instead of helping the Akalis, reported the matter to the police.<sup>40</sup> Bela Singh and Ganda Singh were arrested at Lahore railway station by Mr. Isenmenger S.P., Lahore. They made a clean breast of the whole conspiracy and

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38. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh, (Mes.), p.6.

39. The Akali, Lahore, June 18, 1922.

40. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.4. Also vide Home-Political File No. 268/1922, p.12, letter of V. Connolly, Esq. Secretary to Government Punjab to the Secretary of Government of India, Home Department, Simla, dated 3.5.1921. It reads:-

"About the 20th May, an informer, who has been furnishing the C.I.D. with reports regarding the Gurdwara Committee in Amritsar, told the C.I.D. officer with whom he has been working, that a member of the committee had given word that Bhattan Singh Kahri was sending four men to Lahore to murder Messrs King, Bowring, Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia, and Sardar Sukha Singh, late D.S.P. of Police. On the 21st the informer reported that two Sikhs had visited him in Lahore and he had promised them to show them the houses where the officers mentioned lived .... there they were arrested in the train by Mr. Isenmenger, S.P. Lahore. Each was in possession of

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disclosed the names of S.Kishan Singh and others.<sup>41</sup>

The disclosure of the conspiracy led to the First Akali conspiracy case. About 25 persons were implicated in the case.<sup>42</sup> Six of them turned approvers, five absconded, one died, 6 were arrested and others were let off after preliminary investigations. This case was tried by Mr. P.J. Rust, Special Magistrate and it resulted in the conviction of the three on 18th May, 1922. The case took leisurely speed. The 'Panch' on 2nd November 1921, protested that four months ago some Sikhs were arrested on a charge of the conspiracy to murder certain government officers but they had not as yet been placed on trial.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps, the police were anxious to enmesh as many Akalis as possible in its net.

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40 contd:

Mark VI Webley revolver and spare cartridges, --- 58 rounds altogether, while one of them also carried an Afridi Knife. The informer was Sadhu Singh and the police officer with whom he worked was F.C. Isenmenger, S.P.(C.I.D.) Lahore.

41. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.41.  
Also vide Home Political, File No.268/1922, p.7(V.Connally, Secretary to Panjab Government in his letter to Secretary Government of India dated 30th May, 1922, disclosed this.
42. Home Political, File No.268/1922, p.7.
43. The Panjab Press Abstract, Vol.XXXIV, Lahore, 19th November, 1921, N.A.1.



Ganda Singh and Bela Singh's arrest smashed the whole plot. Ganda Singh became approver and disclosed all the activities, right from the theft of pistols committed on December 4, 1922 from Ambala Armoury of the Air Force.<sup>44</sup>

Subsequently, Chatter Singh Jethuwal and Prem Singh Granthi were arrested, the former from the "Akali" office, Lahore and the latter from Gurdwara Chumala Sahib. Amar Singh of Kot Barra Khan, Tota Singh Peshawari and Tara Singh of Thethar were arrested from Amritsar. Amar Singh's confessions led to the arrest of Chatter Singh of Sheikhpura,<sup>45</sup> who became approver and caused the arrest of Chanchal Singh of Jandiala, Thakar Singh and Varain Singh. Others who were arrested included Bishan Singh of Sherpur, Sham Singh of Kahiri, Bur Singh, Gurbakhash Singh, Sarmukh Singh, Sadhu Singh of Dhuri, Bachittar Singh and Shankar Singh of Pindori Bibi.

The approvers included Ganda Singh 'Sarai' (Amritsar), Sunder Singh alias Sham Singh of Kahiri (Hoshiarpur), Bur Singh Lussar of Karam Singh Wala (Sialkot), Gurbakhash Singh Peshawari, Chatter Singh alias Sant Singh and Sarmukh Singh.<sup>46</sup>

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44. The Akali, Lahore, June 18, 1922.

45. Paper Book Babbar Akali case, p. 853. He was son of Sardar Bahadur Lehna Singh of Village Tung, District Gujjaranwala.

46. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit. p.4.



The absconders were Master Mota Singh, S. Kishan Singh Gargaj, Bijla Singh alias Jagat Singh of Gharuan, Battan Singh of Kahiri, Amar Singh of Delhi and Gurbachan Singh of Ambala.<sup>47</sup> Out of them, Battan Singh died in July, 1921.<sup>48</sup> On August 7, 1921, Chatter Singh of Sheikhpura, Gurbakhash Singh, Bur Singh and Ganda Singh were granted pardon. Bishan Singh, Sadhu Singh, Thakar Singh and Chatter Singh of Jethuwal were also let off. Prem Singh was discharged in January 1922.<sup>49</sup> Amar Singh and Narain Singh were acquitted on 18th May, 1922. Tota Singh, Tara Singh and Bela Singh were sentenced to 5 years each.<sup>50</sup>

Of those who absconded, Master Mota Singh left for Kabul in the second week of June, 1921.<sup>51</sup> Tota Singh had already finished the arrangements of his escape by the end of May, 1921.<sup>52</sup> S. Kishan Singh Gargaj who was Secretary of the

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47. Loc. cit.

48. Home-Political, File No. 266/1922, p. 6. Also, vide Register Karwai Akali Dal (Mss.), p. 9. He was paid rich tribute by the Akali Dal in a condolence meeting, held on August 15, 1921. He was called 'Panth Battan'.

49. Babbar Akali Case judgement, p. 2.

50. Dilgir, H.S. Shiromani Akali Dal, op.cit., p. 75. Also, vide Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p. 6. Also see, Home-Political, File No. 268/1922, p. 17.

51. Sadhu Singh, Jiwani Master Mota Singh II, op.cit., p. 143. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali op.cit., p. 6 is wrong in stating that he left for Kabul on May 31, 1921.

52. Vide interview of the writer with Buta Singh on 20th November, 1982.

Akali Dal, absconded on June 4, 1921 on the persuasion of the Akali leaders like Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri and others.<sup>53</sup> According to Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran,<sup>54</sup> he was thinking of offering himself for arrest but Teja Singh of Bhuchar and Ram Singh of Dharawal advised him against it. Ram Singh even offered to give financial support to his family and this he continued till the end.<sup>55</sup> The course suggested by the leaders was strange. Perhaps, they were not sure of the direction, the Gurdwara Reform movement might take. They thought that the Akalis might be compelled to take up arms and then the militants would stand the movement in good stead.<sup>56</sup> Bijla Singh, Gurbachan Singh and Amar Singh of Delhi, also, absconded. S. Kishan Singh realised that their attempt had failed due to the faulty planning and execution. Once again he planned to re-organise the militants and to achieve this end, he followed a programme of vigorous campaigning. After Master Mota Singh's sudden arrival at Nankana Sahib in 1921, from the Frontier, Kishan Singh sought his advice and formed a 'Chakravarti Jatha' Jathedar Kishan Singh confined his activities to the Doab and it was tentatively decided that similar activities would be started in the Majha by Teja Singh of Bhuchar and his like-minded companions.<sup>57</sup> With Master Mota Singh's arrest on 16th June, 1922<sup>58</sup> and Bijla Singh's reclamation later on, by the

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53. The Panjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, June 13, 1982.

54. Vide interview of the writer with Buta Singh in November 20, 1982.

55. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh, (Mss.), p.36.

56. Vide interview of the writer with Buta Singh on Nov.20, 1982.

57. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy, p.59.

58. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement op.cit., p.187.

Prime Minister of Patiala, Sir Daya Kishan Kaul,<sup>59</sup> it was left to Kishan Singh to pilot the militant movement. The sympathisers like Teja Singh of Bhuehar<sup>60</sup> and Ram Singh of Dharowal seemed to have retraced their steps, later on, and were alleged to have been acting as the agents of Patiala<sup>61</sup> and thus showed weakness unworthy of the militants.

Towards the Formation of the Chakarvarti Jatha: After the failure of the First Akali conspiracy, Master Mota Singh left for the Frontier and S. Kishan Singh took refuge with Sant Kartar Singh at Pragpur (Jullundur).<sup>62</sup> With his assistance, he left for Mastuana<sup>63</sup> in June, 1922.<sup>64</sup> From Pragpur they went to Ambala on June 8, 1921 as Kishan Singh wanted to meet Narain Singh Naik of his ex-regiment. On reaching there, it was learnt that he had been arrested on June 6, 1921 as two revolvers had been found in his possession.<sup>65</sup> They proceeded to Dhuri and met

59. Ibid., p.183.

60. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.35.

61. The Nawan Sahib, October, 1982. Also The Panjab Darpan, Amritsar, June 15, 1923.

62. Sant Kartar Singh alias Sharafdin S/O Fateh Din belonged to Desu Malkana. He was a convert and was baptised by Sant Attar Singh of Mastuana. Then he became a Sadhu and came across Sant Mit Singh of Kishan Pura (Jullundur) and Sant Gurbakhash Singh of Ghural. Sant Mit Singh was well known to Bela Singh of Pragpur. As Kartar Singh lived with Sant Mit Singh, he made good use of his acquaintance with Bela Singh who put up a Chhappar (reed hut) for Sant Kartar Singh near his well. Pragpur was only a mile away from the Indian Infantry lines at Jullundur Cantonment as well as from Birring, the native village of S. Kishan Singh. This Kartar Singh proved traitor to the Babbar Akali movement, later on.

63. Mastuana is near Sangrur. It was the abode of Sant Attar Singh who rendered a great service to the Sikh cause.

64. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.50.

65. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sikhan Dian Bemisal Qurbanan — Bahaduri-1-Sikhan (Mas), pp.156-160 (K.C.L.).

Harjas Singh Tunda and Jathedar Sunder Singh. On the occasion of Nimani fair at Mastuana, Kishan Singh announced a plan of action on the lines of Guru Gobind Singh at a diwan which was largely attended. It included persons like Bijla Singh, Sadhu Singh of Dhuri, Amar Singh of Delhi, Tehal Singh and other members of the Dhuri Jatha. The diwan was arranged by Teja Singh, an emigrant from Canada. Kishan Singh got permission to deliver a lecture. He began his lecture with the couplet:

"Sura So Pahchanie Jo Lare Din Ke Het,  
Purza Purza Kat Mare Kabhun Man Chhade Khet."

(Brave is the person who fights for the faith, come what may, Is chopped limb by limb and deserts not the battle array.)<sup>66</sup> He condemned the government for its atrocities and bemoaned that the rulers were fleecing the subjects.<sup>67</sup> When he began to explain its meaning, Teja Singh stopped him on the ground that he was inciting the assembly by putting revolutionary ideas in their minds. At this he called off the diwan.

The atrocities of the bureaucratic machinery and

66. The English translation is by the writer.

67. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.49. Dr. Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.117 is wrong when he states that at the Mastuana diwan Karam Singh Babbar recited the poem 'Khanda Pakre Shero Akhe Babbar Wangar'. He did not visit Mastuana at all at that time.

complicity of the British officers to obstruct the progress of the Gurdwara Reform movement had considerably enraged the masses. Even the native states, especially Kapurthala, had earned notoriety for their anti-Akali stance. It was true that the native rulers were out-Heroding-Herod. Even the wearing of the kirpans was not allowed. Sardar Sunder Singh Lyallpuri contributed an article to the 'Banda Matram' of 9th July, 1921, taking exception to the policy of the Panjab Government in regard to the Kirpan. He observed when the government had not fixed the length of the Kirpan, the arrest of the Sikhs for wearing long Kirpans was absurd.<sup>68</sup>

Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj took stock of the situation and contemplated to start a programme of divans and conferences, where speeches were to be delivered and the poems were to be recited to create an awakening among the masses.

After the stay of about 3 months at Dhuri, Kishan Singh came back to the Doab. He was accompanied by Bijla Singh and Tehal Singh. They came to Hardas Pur (Kapurthala State) and stayed with Prem Kaur, sister of Joginder Singh of Khuradpur who was related to Kishan Singh and was one of the participants in the first Akali Conspiracy case.<sup>69</sup> Sant Kartar Singh was also

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68. The Panjab Press Abstract Vol. XXXIV, No. 28, p. 307, Lahore.

69. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.), p. 49. This information was given to him by S. Balwant Singh, nephew of S. Joginder Singh of Khuradpur.



sent for from Pragpur. In the Doab, Kishan Singh delivered his first speech at Hardaspur after his return from the Malwa.<sup>70</sup> Next day they went to Plahi and stayed in the house of Master Ram Singh.<sup>71</sup> Chanda Singh also came to see Kishan Singh. In the beginning of October, 1921 a diwan was held there which was attended by 250 persons. Among the audience were Bela Singh of Pragpur, Arjan Singh, Tehal Singh, Sant Kartar Singh and Babu Santa Singh of 54th Sikh regiment.<sup>72</sup> Kishan Singh advised the audience to wear black turbans, become Akalis and follow the policy of non-cooperation with the government.<sup>73</sup>

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70. Makhsuspur, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lahar, op.cit., p.52.

71. He was a teacher in the Khalsa Middle School, Plahi. He belonged to Nadala. He later on became an approver in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case.

72. He belonged to Chhoti Merion, District Ludhiana. He was a clerk in 54th regiment. He came into contact with Sant Kartar Singh and after wards came very close to Kishan Singh. The latter cast a spell on him and he left his service to become an active member of the Chakarvarti Jatha. He was an activist and took part in all the major actions of the Babbar Jatha. When Babbar Jatha was floated, he was elected its treasurer. Later on, he became its Secretary when Karam Singh of Daulatpur became its President after Kishan Singh's arrest. Sant Kartar Singh duped him in the end and he was got arrested at Tapa railway station on June 20, 1923.

73. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, case p.50.



During this period diwans were also held at Phagwara, Chaheru and Khajurala.

Then Kishan Singh alongwith Bijla Singh, Prem Kaur, Tehal Singh, Bela Singh, Arjan Singh, Babu Santa Singh and Sant Kartar Singh left for Patara.<sup>74</sup> Here Kishan Singh discussed his programme with Master Mota Singh in a sugar-cane-field, where the latter had hidden himself. Master Mota Singh appreciated his plan and promised to deliver speeches in the diwans arranged by the "Chakravarti Jatha" and also suggested to unify the militants in the Doaba.<sup>75</sup> From Patara, Kishan Singh returned to Haripur where he delivered a lecture in a diwan on December 6, 1921.<sup>76</sup> He was accompanied by Karam Singh of Jhingar and Atma Singh of Bika. They left for Gurdwara Kishanpura, and from there, they went to Ghurial and stayed with Sant Gurbakhash Singh. Next, they proceeded to Bhubiana, Tehsil Phagwara in Kapurthala State, where they put up with Jathedar Diwan Singh. Here Kishan Singh delivered a lecture in the diwan arranged there. He asked the people not to be afraid of the police and advised them to arm themselves at the earliest. The speeches delivered by him were full of references to the sacrifices made by the Sikh Gurus, and the numerous heroes of Sikh history. He, also marshalled the events of Sikh history

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74. Master Mota Singh belonged to Patara. The Akalis and the Babbar Akalis held him in high esteem and due to their regard for him, his village was a place of pilgrimage for them. They called it "the Mecca".

75. Sunder Singh Makhauspuri, Karam Singh of Jhingar, Assa Singh of Phakrudi and Karam Singh of Daulatpur were doing very useful work for the cause of the Akali movement.

76. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, p.51.  
Also, vide Babbar Akali case Judgement, 1925, p.14.

and martial deeds in such a way as if to make them live again.

When Jathedar Kishan Singh was thus busy in creating an awareness in the Doab, there were also others who were carrying intensive propaganda against the British in their own way. Sunder Singh Makhauspuri had reached Nankana after the tragedy on the call of the Panth with a Jatha of 15 Sikhs. He was well-acquainted with Jathedar Kishan Singh, since 1920.<sup>77</sup> He learnt about the seditious speeches of the Jathedar. Karam Singh of Jhingar and Assa Singh of Phakrudi were returned emigrants. They were, then, very active members of the Congress Party. In October, 1920 they had participated in the meetings of District Congress Committee of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur respectively. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, another returned emigrant, took 'Khanda Ka Pahul' at Nankana alongwith Assa Singh. He tried to hold a political conference in his village but due to the prohibition of conferences u/s 144 of I.P.C., the venue had to be shifted to Mehatpur (Hoshiarpur). In March, 1921 Karam Singh of Jhingar, Assa Singh of Phakrudi and Karam Singh of Daulatpur delivered speeches in the diwan at Mahalpur. In a diwan at Kukar Majara in October, 1921, Sunder Singh also made a speech. Kishan Singh thought of welding all these elements.

Formation of the Chakravarti Jatha: In November 1921 a big conference was held in Rurka Kalan (Jullundur).<sup>78</sup> E. Kishan Singh

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77. Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.54.

78. Ibid., p.57.

sent for Sunder Singh and Karam Singh of Jhinger for mutual discussion and consultation. In this meeting, Karam Singh Jhingar delivered a forceful speech<sup>79</sup> and Sunder Singh recited a 'Shabad'. Master Mota Singh and Kishan Singh did not attend the conference but stayed at Jandiala in the house of Mehar Singh. When the conference was over, the formation of the Chakravarti Jatha was announced with the objective of carrying on anti-Government propaganda. Then the members of the Jatha penetrated into the heart of the Doab to carry on propaganda against the British. One group consisting of Bhai Kishan Singh, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Sunder Singh Makhauspuri started a ceaseless campaign in Jullundur District with frequent incursions into Kapurthala State as well as in some parts of Ambala District. This group arranged a series of diwans at Bhupiana, Kurka, Bolina, Pindori Nijjaran, Dingrian, Haripur, Buhani, Bhojwal and Sangoval. The daily routine was to hold two meetings or diwans. The first meeting was held by 1 P.M. The people of the area were informed and after the meeting was over, the Jatha used to move to another village. At 9 p.m. the second diwan was held. Then the Jatha would leave for the next village where the diwan was to be organised the following day. Thus from mid-night to the noon, the group slept, took rest and carried on preparations for the next diwan. The police shadowed them but was never able to apprehend them.

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79. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS), Ch.1.

Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj stirred the audience with his fiery speeches, whereas his companions like Karam Singh of Jhingar and Sunder Singh recited poems.<sup>80</sup> It is notable that those Akalis had become Chakarvartis after warrants were issued to arrest them. Kishan Singh was already an absconder of the First Akali conspiracy case and a reward of Rs. 200 was announced to arrest him.<sup>81</sup> In December 1921, a big diwan was arranged in Jhingar where Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Asa Singh of Phakrudī and Karam Singh of Jhingar delivered speeches. This was followed by the diwans at Harian and Jagatpur. Their arrest warrants were issued due to their speeches delivered in these diwans. Since then, they too became Chakarvartis.<sup>82</sup> This was the second Jatha which carried on an intensive propaganda against the government for its atrocities on the Akalis who were waging a life and death struggle against the Mahants.

Gurbachan Singh of Sadhara claims that these Jathas were metamorphosis of Nirvair Sewak Shahid Jatha, Doaba. Its President at that time was Dalip Singh of Sadhara.<sup>83</sup> The passage of the Rowlatt Bill had aroused the wrath of the people and there were hectic political activities in the Doab. Consequently,

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80. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.58.

81. Ibid., p.47.

82. Ibid., p.59.

83. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.3 and 18.

Karam Singh of Daulatpur and Dalip Singh of Sadhara arranged conferences in their own villages. Karam Singh of Jhingar arranged in Jhingar, Khuradpur, Baddon, and Rurka Kalan; Lakha Singh in Kot Patuhi and Khem Singh in Sirhala Khurad, Mehatpur, Bachauri, Garhi Kanungoan and Bilga.<sup>84</sup> With the start of the Gurdwara Reform Movement and more particularly after the Nankana tragedy these Akalis began a virulent propaganda. The leaders of the two prominent Jathas, Kishan Singh of Birring and Karam Singh of Daulatpur acted, more or less, independently of each other in the earlier stages.<sup>85</sup>

Propaganda Campaign of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj:

The programme of divans and conferences had the blessings of Master Mota Singh. The spate of divans proved fertile recruiting ground for the Akali Dal as well as the Indian National Congress. It had volcanic effect on the people. Kishan Singh Gargaj had endeared himself to the people because he gave them hope in his speeches. He, alone, had delivered 327 speeches at different places in the Majha, Doaba and Malwa till his arrest.<sup>86</sup>

His group made a hurricane tour of the Doaba. After the Rurka Conference in November, 1921, the group went to Jandiala

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84. Ibid, p.18.

85. Home Department (Political), File No.245/1926 Batch 4th.  
Also, vide Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.129.

86. Ibid., p.149.



and from there it proceeded to Samranwan to hold a diwan. It was followed by a diwan at Kotli Than Singh where Babu Santa Singh joined the Jatha in January, 1922.<sup>87</sup> He was posted at Jhelum Contonment as a clerk in the 84th regiment which he resigned on 26th January, 1922.<sup>88</sup> Atma Singh of Bika was also a member of this Jatha at that time. This group was able to create a stir by its ceaseless propaganda in the Sirowal area, Haripur, Bolina, Bhojowal, Kotli Than Singh, Pindori Nijjaran, Dingrian, Ghurial, Khuradpur, Manak Dheri, Manak Rai, Kala Bakra, Kishan Pura, Nasrula, Munkhiana, Rajpura, Manko, Birring, Buhani, Piddi Khalsa and Sangowal.<sup>89</sup>

The diwan at Bhubiana in January 1922 and a conference at Burka Kalan were important but the diwans at Pindori Nijjaran and Dingrian were very vituperative. Pindori Nijjaran became important centre of the Chakarvartis. This village contributed 13 active workers, the most important of them being Buta Singh who remained very close associate of Kishan Singh Gargaj. Kishan Singh Gargaj in his speech at Pindori Nijjaran exhorted the

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87. Babbar Akali case Judgement, p.149. The statement, that Babu Santa Singh joined the Jatha of Karam Singh of Daulatpur, is not correct. See, Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.1023, where Babu Santa Singh states that he joined Kishan Singh's group in the beginning. However, later on, he associated himself with Karam Singh of Daulatpur due to his differences with Kishan Singh Gargaj.

88. Ibid., p.1026.

89. Vide paper Book Babbar Akali case, pp. 52-56.



Sikhs to join the Akali Dal, intimidate jholichuks and wage a relentless struggle to reform the Gurdwaras. He also announced that he would compel the British to get out of India. He also suggested that the toadies like Lambardar Bhagwan Singh and Harnam Singh as well as chaukidars of the village, named Jiwan and Maulube reformed.<sup>90</sup>

The diwan at Pindori Nijjaran was organised by the Congress Party. But the Chakarvartis made full use of the same. Sant Kartar Singh sought permission for a 'premi' to deliver a lecture. Then Kishan Singh delivered the lecture incognito. His next lecture was at Dingrian which was arranged by Master Bishan Singh. Here Sundar Singh Makhsuspurī recited the poem:

Hind de Bahaduro Nahin Vela Saun Da

Aa gya vagat Tegh De Uthaun Da

(O' Brave Indians it is not time to slumber and stagger. The time is ripe to wield the dagger.)

Jathedar Kishan Singh's activities were being widely acclaimed. He was not only an eye-sore to the Government, but also to certain Akalis who began to oppose him. Hari Singh Jullunduri wrote articles and editorials against him in the 'Akali-Te-Pardesi'. It gave Kishan Singh many anxious moments. However, reconciliation took place. All acquiesced to Hari Singh's suggestion that the reformation of the jholichuks should also be taken in hand.<sup>91</sup> Then the group went to Pragpur, Haripur, and

90. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, pp.116-117 (Statement of Tufail Mohammad, P.W.14).

91. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, pp.52-53. Also vide Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangrash(Mas), p.68.

Pindori Nijjaran to carry on its activities.

The contact with the students of the Khalsa High School Jullundur began those days. It was Babu Santa Singh who visited Bakhtawar Singh.<sup>92</sup> Milkha Singh came to know of it and he went with Santa Singh to Patara where he met Kishan Singh in the attic of Bhai Udham Singh, a close associate of Master Mota Singh. From there Bhai Kishan Singh and Milkha Singh went to Pindori Nijjaran.

Babu Santa Singh and Milkha Singh were sent to Amritsar who met Teja Singh of Bhuchar, Editor of the Gargaj Akali and Ram Singh of Dharowal, Editor of the Ajit. On their return, Milkha Singh narrates that there was a large number of people in his Haveli, which included many from Dingrian and Khuradpur. Bhai Kishan Singh delivered a fiery speech which was highly critical of the Congress Party.<sup>93</sup>

This Jatha also toured some parts of Ambala District. It had proceeded to attend Gurpurabs at Chamkaur Sahib, and Sirhind but the enthusiasm and eagerness of the people prompted them to hold divans in the surrounding villages, too. In this incursion Kishan Singh was accompanied by Sunder Singh of Makhsuspur and Karam Singh of Jhingar. Assa Singh, Hari Singh

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92. Babbar Akali Sangrarsh (MSS.), p.69.

93. Ibid., p.70.

of Sundh and Karam Singh of Daulatpur too accompanied them for some days.<sup>94</sup> At the time of Shahidi-Jor-Mela in December, 1921 at Fatehgarh Sahib, Sirhind, Kishan Singh delivered a thunderous speech. On the testimony of Giani Nahar Singh, he began his speech with the invocation to the weapons. Bijla Singh Gharuan too accompanied him.<sup>95</sup> The fact has been further supported by the disclosure of Bhai Ram Singh who stated that Bhai Kishan Singh Gargaj and Bhai Ram Singh of Dharowal delivered anti-British speeches whereas Maharaja of Patiala tried to influence these Akalis by <sup>l</sup>doing out money as he wanted to use them against the Nabha ruler.<sup>96</sup> The speeches actually created a consternation in the mind of Maharaja of Patiala and he feared forcible seizure of the Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib and to avoid this he exerted his influence.<sup>97</sup> Bhai Kishan Singh's group also staged diwans in Sudhupur, Sirhind Bassi and many villages of Kharar Tehsil. The area was virgin for political propaganda as neither any Akali nor any Congress worker had ever penetrated there. On 5th January, 1922, a diwan was held at Bharatpur and at the time of Maghi fair, a diwan was arranged at Surapur. During this

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94. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.59.

95. Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Lehar, op.cit., p.301.

96. The Nawan Sahib, Delhi, op.cit., 1982 (an article by Jamuna Dass Akhtar).

97. Ganda Singh, Dr. , Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, op.cit., pp.180-81.

tour, the Jatha enrolled 5000 Akali and Congress members.<sup>98</sup> In their speeches they exhorted the people to give up non-violence. The people were made conscious of the fact that the peaceful means had failed to achieve the object.

On 12th January, 1922, the Sikhs of Hoshiarpur and Jullundur districts, under the leadership of Mula Singh of Bahawal, took possession of Takhat Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur) and Kiratpur Sahib. As it was attempted without the permission of the S.G.P.C., so the committee disapproved of this action.<sup>99</sup> Actually, it was the "Chakarvarti Jatha" of Kishan Singh, comprising Sunder Singh, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Gian Singh of Bela that made plans to capture Gurdwara Kiratpur. It were they who sent messages to villagers who came in flocks and Gurdwara of Kiratpur was taken possession of before the day-break.<sup>100</sup>

This Jatha made its next appearance at Churial in a diwan held from 24th to 26th February, 1922. Sant Gurbakhash Singh had arranged 101 uninterrupted recitations of the Holy Granth. On the last day, speeches and poems captivated the audience. On the authority of Milkha Singh Nijjar, who himself recited a poem, "Nathe Jan Feringhee" (The English have taken to heels),

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98. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.60.

99. Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat, Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.135.

100. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.,p.60.

two camel riders alighted and took up the stage. One of them, Bhai Sunder Singh recited a beautiful poem, "What will the people say, if the Feringhee is not hit on the head".<sup>101</sup>

Then Jathedar Kishan Singh delivered a forceful speech which held the audience spell-bound. In February 1922, diwans were also held in the villages of Kapurthala state such as Lakhpur, Sahni, Sunira, Babeli, Domeli, Narur, Panshet, Palahi, Manak, Sangatpur, Hardaspur and Maheru.<sup>102</sup>

No occasion was missed to use the stage for propaganda. In March, 1922, the Congress party was holding a conference at Khuradpur, which was addressed by C.R. Dass, Lala Hans Raj, Smt. Lajjya-Wati and Swami Satya Dev. When the leaders had left, Jathedar Kishan Singh came to the stage and addressed the assembly with an unsheathed sword. He remarked that the people of the Bania party, who just left, had destroyed the country. The time was certainly critical for the Congress. Non-cooperation Movement had failed and Gandhiji withdrew it after Chauri-Chaura incident.<sup>103</sup> The leaders were put behind

101. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.53. The couplet reads in beautiful Panjabi as under:-

Ki Kahu Lokai Singhan Nal Buri Hoi,  
Ghotne di chot Je Feringhee Sir Lai Nan

102. Makhsusuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.62.

103. Chauri-Chaura is a village in Uttar Pradesh near Gorakhpur. The police had opened fire but when their ammunition was exhausted they shut themselves inside a building. The mob set fire to it and burnt 22 policemen to death on February 5, 1922.



the bars and were the subject of ridicule. Lachhman Singh, who was Secretary of this conference, forbade Kishan Singh to speak further but the audience insisted on Kishan Singh to continue. They became hostile to Lachhman Singh.<sup>104</sup> A Muslim boy, Tufail Mohammed of Pindori Nijjaran came into the chakarvarti fold here and since then began to act as a herald of the Chakarvartis.<sup>105</sup> He was given the responsibility to announce the holding of diwans by the beat of drum. This Jatha organised Diwans and Conferences in the Phagwara Tehsil of Kapurthala state as well.

While Kishan Singh's group busied itself in Ambala District and then in Jullundur and Kapurthala, the group of Karam Singh of Daulatpur held meetings at various places in Hoshiarpur. On return from Chamkaur Sahib 'Martyrdom fair' Their centre of activity in January and February 1922 were mainly Balachaur. Mahal Gehla, Nawanshehr, Chak Sangha, Ramgarh Jhuggian, and Langroa, Bhai Ude Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian and Dhanna Singh of Bahbalpur were new entrants. Master Dalip Singh of Gossal delivered speeches at Furka Kalan, Mahal Gehla and Apra. His arrest warrants were issued in March, 1922.<sup>106</sup>

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104. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy, p.33.

105. Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Lehar, op.cit., p.302.

106. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.63. Also vide Paper Book Babbar conspiracy case, pp.216-217.



The conference at Kot Fatuhi was a rendezvous for all the chakarvarti groups.<sup>107</sup> It was organised from February 24 to 26, 1922,<sup>108</sup> and was mainly the result of the efforts of the residents of Kot Fatuhi, such as Partap Singh an emigrant from Canada, Raja Singh and Giani Ram Singh.<sup>109</sup> Other important members who helped the Chakarvartis and shielded them, were Bhai Lakha Singh and Hardit Singh. Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan, granthi at Kot Fatuhi and an approver of the First Akali conspiracy case, too, was there. The audience organised a formidable ring round chakarvartis and police dared not risk the clash. The arrival and departure of Master Mota Singh after delivering an hour long speech reads like a fairy tale. He rode a mare given by Bishan Singh of Mangat and went straight towards Kot Fatuhi and reached near Pindi Kotla on the banks of Baein. There he dismounted the mare and asked Lakha Singh to mount. Immediately, he disguised himself as a sadhu and went straight to the police camp, talked to the officer and reached a day earlier at Kot Fatuhi. This is nothing short of a detective story.<sup>111</sup> Next day, at about 3 p.m., he delivered a lecture fearlessly and was able to hide safely in the house of a poor Muslim named Bullia and thus foiled all the attempts of 50 policemen and 100 artillery men to arrest him. The importance,

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107. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar "kali Lehar, op.cit., p.63

108. The Pardesi Khalsa, Amritsar, March 4, 1922.

109. Ibid. Dr. Karlesh Mohan's statement that the conference at Kot Fatuhi was organised by Karam Singh, vide Journal of Regional History Vol.I, 1982, p.148, is not corroborated by any contemporary source.

110. He was martyred at Babeli, on September 1, 1923.

111. Sadhu Singh Mastana, Master Mota Singh Ji, Jiwani,

f.n.111 & 112 next page.

of the conference lies in the fact that it demoralised the government machinery, encouraged the chakarvartis and added to their popularity in the Doab.<sup>112</sup> The Speaker after speaker in the diwan had urged the policemen and the soldiers in the army to leave the government service as it was 'Haram'. The diwan was concluded with the resolution appreciating the services of S.Kishan Singh Gargaj, Master Mota Singh, Giani Ram Singh Sutantar, Sunder Singh Akali and Maulvi Wali Mohammed for the national cause.<sup>113</sup>

During the year 1921-22 the Doab had become a hotbed of sedition and anti-government activities. No wonder, the Jullundur area found its leaders in Kishan Singh and Sunder Singh, the Banga area had Karam Singh of Jhingar and Dalip Singh of Gossal, while S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur was active in the Nawanshehar belt. Dalip Singh of Fadhora and Dharam Singh of Hayatpur Rurki were active in Mahalpur area and Harbans Singh of Sirhala and Kartar Singh of Gondpur were active in the periphery of Hoshiarpur and Sham Chaurasi. Every important village had Akalis who became Chakarvartis. Even the State of Kapurthala had its rich contribution in Subedar Amar Singh of Dhalival, Chanda Singh of Plahi, Shiv Singh of Buhani

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f.n. 111 & 112.

op.cit., pp.22-31. The gist of the talk of Master Mota Singh and the Police Officer is reminiscent of his influence over the people. The police officer stated that Master Mota Singh did not run away but took to wings. Bhagat Singh Bilga, Secretary, D.B.Y.H. Jullundur also vouchsafed it in an interview with the writer on November 20, 1982.

112. Ibid., p.32.

113. The Pardesi Khalsa, Amritsar, March 4, 1922.

and Kartar Singh of Domeli.<sup>114</sup> It was here that the sting of the rulers was the sharpest. Diwan Durga Dass was more loyal to the British than the British themselves. His atrocities knew no limits. The wearing of black turban was an un-pardonable offence with him. The Shiromani Akali Dal in its Interim meeting on April 2, 1922 under the Presidentship of Kartar Singh Jhabbar condemned the atrocities on the Sikhs in Kapurthala where their holy symbols, especially, the Keshas were desecrated. Hooka water was poured out on their hair and they were beaten with shoes.<sup>115</sup> This was too odious for the chakarvartis to bear. They began to challenge the police officers openly and warned their touts to desist from the despicable path. This became evident in March 1922 at the time of Holi Mohalla fair. Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj alongwith his companions delivered a seditious speech expressing British atrocities. He also challenged the police party present there to arrest him. When the police tried to act, there was a malee in the fair and hundreds of the Akalis encircled the policemen. Isher Singh, Sub-Inspector had to ask the constables to be prudent. The force of the chakarvartis was even confirmed by the Inspector

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114. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh (MSS), pp. 61-62.

115. The Pardesi Khalsa, Amritsar, op.cit., April 7, 1922.

in the court when he appeared as a prosecution witness in the Babbar Akali case.<sup>116</sup>

Soon after the fair, a meeting was addressed at Dhanowali near the Dhanowali railway crossing on Grand Trunk Road. Bhan Singh of Birring, Zaildar Sham Singh of Talhan, Buta Singh Lambardar of Mangal Shamman, Amar Singh Sufedposh of Johal, Jamadar Dalip Singh of Salempur were holding a meeting to discuss the question of boycott of the Zaildar Talhan and his family by the Akalis. In the meantime Kishan Singh Gargaj, alongwith Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri, Mula Singh of Bahawal, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Jogindar Singh of Khuradpur arrived in a car. They took hold of the stage without allowing the audience to go. Karam Singh of Jhingar was holding a sword whereas Mula Singh was armed with a gun and they were standing by the side of Kishan Singh Gargaj who was delivering the speech. S. Kishan Singh Gargaj remarked that the Jholichuks expected rewards and squares of land, but they would get no such preserve as the Akalis were about to destroy not only the preserves but also the Jar which contained the preserve.<sup>117</sup>

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116. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.65.

117. Vide Paper Book, Babbar Conspiracy, Trial No.11 of 1924, The crown V/S Kishan Singh and others, p.401. (evidence of Bhan Singh of Birring in the court). Also vide Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.104-105. Also see Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Babbar Akali Tehrik(Mss), p.119.

This was followed by a diwan at Buhani in March, 1922, in Phagwara Tehsil where the toadies were given a strict warning to mend their ways. This was attended by Kartar Singh of Gondpur and Harbans Singh of Sirhala and was addressed by Master Mota Singh and Jathedar Kishan Singh. Kishan Singh remarked in his speech that there were quite a few white turbans in the audience which he would like to see them changed into black ones. A person wearing white turban stood up and told that Bishan Singh Zaildar of Rani Thua would not even let them recite 'shabads' what to talk of wearing black turbans. Then Kishan Singh declared if there was any relative or well-wisher of Bishan Singh, he should advise him against such things. If he did not pay any heed, then one of his brave fellows would reform him with the sword.<sup>118</sup>

They held next diwan at Piddi Khalsa. Then Kishan Singh, Babu Santa Singh, Harbans Singh of Sirhala, Kartar Singh of Gondpur and Sant Kartar Singh went to Jullundur Cantonment and met Naik Ganga Singh. He was advised to spread dissatisfaction among the troops and convert them to the militant views. At Jullundur they also met Milkha Singh and some other students of Khalsa High School. There they stayed with contractor Teja Singh of Dingrian. From there Kishan Singh proceeded to Phojowal on 15th March, 1922 to hold a diwan but the programme was changed due to the presence of heavy police force. He went to Sangowal, then

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118. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, pp. 53-54.



to Kishan Pura and turned back in the evening.

It was on 19th March, 1922 at Sangowal where Jathedar Kishan Singh delivered a lecture alongwith his companions like Babu Santa Singh, Kartar Singh of Gondpur, and Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri. With the arrival of the police they went to a well outside the village.<sup>119</sup> It was with the help of their sympathisers, who gave them timely information, that they narrowly escaped; other wise they would have fallen in the hands of the police.<sup>120</sup>

Sangowal Diwan and its Aftermath: The chakarvartis had a tough time at Sangowal <sup>121</sup>diwan on 19th March, 1922. The people were really under police duress and the toadies had become so bold that they created disturbance in the diwan. None from the village dared to become Sabhapati of the diwan. Jathedar <sup>Santa</sup> Kishan Singh, Sunder Singh, Babu/Singh, Kartar Singh of Gondpur and Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad met in a conclave at a well betwixt the villages of Beas and Sangowal. It was suggested that razors be purchased for cutting off the ears and noses of the notorious jholichuks. First, they were to be warned, then, chopping off the limbs was to be resorted to. In case, it did not prove of any avail then, the only alternative left was 'to reform' them with the

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119. Paper Book Bab bar Akali Conspiracy, p.85.

120. Babbar Akali case Judgement, 1925, p.136.

121. This village was in the news during the Ghadar movement of 1915. Chanda Singh of Nangal Kalan had got arrested S. Piara Singh of Langeri and was, consequently, made  
contd...

sword.<sup>122</sup> Some of the toadies such as Sham Singh Zaildar of Talhan and Harnam Singh Sufedposh of Mehdiipur were marked for immediate action. Also, it was made obligatory for the Chakarvartis to keep themselves armed.

Babu Santa Singh bought 4 razors from Jullundur cantonment. The Chakarvartis, then met in the cottage of Sant Thakur Singh of Mundial at Rajowal<sup>123</sup> on March 24, 1922.<sup>124</sup> S. Kishan Singh asked Thakur Singh to send for Hazara Singh of Munder. On his arrival, Jathedar Kishan Singh gave two razors to Babu Santa Singh, one to Hazara Singh and one he kept with himself. He told Hazara Singh that the razor had been made over to him to cut off the nose and ears of Harnam Singh Sufedposh of Mehdiipur,<sup>125</sup> and he was told to seek the help of Amar Singh of Rajowal, Chajja Singh and Diwan Singh of Massania.<sup>126</sup>

Harnam Singh of Mehdiipur was the special target of the 'chakarvartis' because he had appeared as a prosecution witness against S. Naginder Singh of Kandhola in the court who had presided over a meeting held by 'Akalis' at Khurdpur on August 21,

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121 contd:

Zaildar, in lieu of his loyalty. Santa Singh and Fur Singh of Sangowal murdered him on the seventh day of the incident, in his house. The pro-Government elements abounded in the villages of Sangowal, Alawalpur and Kala Bakra.

122. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.68. Also vide Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.55 (Statement of Sant Kartar Singh of Pragpur).

123. Loc.cit.

124. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.68.

125. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.55.

126. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.68.

1921. Consequently, the latter was sentenced to 2 years' rigorous imprisonment. Within a few days of the sentence, Hazara Singh of Munder alongwith his companions, grievously assaulted the Sufedposh. Sunder Singh of Makhauspur was entrusted with the reformation of Sham Singh Zaildar of Talhan. To accomplish this, he took Basant Singh Canadian of Sirhala Khurad with him and went to Bistrampur to contact Ujjagar Singh. They failed to accomplish the project because Zaildar Sham Singh was away in connection with a marriage.<sup>127</sup> When they learnt this from Ujjagar Singh, they left for their villages. The Chakarvartis, no doubt, were acting boldly and were putting up a brave front to cow down the sycophants. A few small incidents, too, emboldened them.

In April, 1922, Jathedar Kishan Singh, Sunder Singh, Babu Santa Singh, Kartar Singh of Gondpur and Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad went on doing propaganda near about Jullundur cantonment. During their itinerary, one day, they came to know that an Akali, named, Bakhshish Singh was being beaten in the police post of Khajurala for the offence of keeping a Kirpan and wearing black turban. The chakarvartis challenged them and this brought the offenders to their knees. They begged pardon for their foolish action. They also divulged that they were doing so at the instance of Bishan Singh Zaildar of Ranipur Thua.

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127. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.69.

In the first week of May, 1922, Kishan Singh, Babu Santa Singh and Bela Singh of Pragpur met Kirpal Singh of Malakpur (Rawalpindi) and Partap Singh of Sialkot who were serving in 52 Sikh regiment at Jullundur. They also met Ganga Singh Naik of Gurdaspur here. All were persuaded to spread disaffection in the ranks and procure ammunition for the Chakarvartis.

During this period Jathedar Kishan Singh and Babu Santa Singh also went to Khalsa High School, Jullundur. Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran had already become a protagonist of this group and it was on his request that Jathedar came there and met some more students. They included Gurdial Singh Bhullar who rose to become Superintendent of Police. Karam Singh of Haripur, Sampuran Singh of Haripur who retired as Headmaster, later on; Pritam Singh of Khuradpur, Surain Singh and Rattan Singh of Manak, Swaran Singh (Ex-Foreign Minister of India) was also their class-fellow, but he did not evince any interest in political activities at that time.

The students were captured by the spell of the Jathedar and they immediately, offered their services for the cause of the motherland, but he persuaded them to continue their studies till the appropriate time.

This group brought an unforeseen enthusiasm among the people by a spate of diwans in the villages of Sundh,

Sandhawan, Chabbewal, Mahalpur, Zian, Barrian Kalan, Sirhala Kalan, Kukar Muzara, Bahawal, Jandoli, Kulewal, Lehlian Kalan, Lehlian Khurad, Bassi Kalan, Bilaspur, Garhshankar, Moila, Bihra and Jassowal, etc. During this period, the enrolment of the Akali and the Congress members were also carried on by the Chakarvartis simultaneously. Till this time, they supplemented the activities of the Akalis and Congress. In the Panjab they were like contributory streams to the river of National Emancipation.<sup>128</sup>

SUNDH AFFAIR: It was at Sundh that the pro-government villagers made first assault on the Chakarvartis. On May 11, 1922, Jathedar Kishan Singh and Sunder Singh were going to Pragpur from Pindori Ganga Singh. Near Baddon Chattar Singh of Kandola and Arjan Singh of Sundh joined them. Arjan Singh told the Jathedar that his brother Hari Singh had been arrested by the police, three days ago. At this, they proceeded to Sundh ostensibly to sympathise with the wife of Hari Singh.<sup>129</sup> They took their meals there. Chattar Singh stayed there with Milkhi Ram, Congress President of the local unit. Jathedar Kishan Singh and Sunder Singh left the place and Arjan Singh went

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128. There was no Babbar organisation as yet. See, Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.70.

129. Ibid., p.72. The purpose of their visit to Sundh explicitly might be to express sympathy with Hari Singh's wife but implicit reason was to terrorise the loyalists so that they might not create trouble in future. Vide Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh (Mss.) Ch.14.



along to see them off. The loyalists seemed to be after rewards. Jathedar Kishan Singh had been under the arrest warrants since June, 1921 and Sunder Singh since October, 1921. Rewards had been proclaimed for their arrest<sup>130</sup> and the toadies of Sundh set their eyes on the rewards. Lambardar Sher Singh had brought two constables, Ganda Singh and Ghulam Mohammed since 9th May, 1922, from Banga police station to affect Arjan Singh's arrest. The mob was incited by the Lambardar. Jathedar, sensing the danger advised Arjan Singh to offer himself for arrest but the tall talk of Sunder Singh created trouble and in the skirmish, that ensued, Sunder Singh was arrested<sup>131</sup>, while Kishan Singh managed to escape by resorting to firing at blank range. It was considered inexpedient to shoot at the the mob as that would have landed Arjan Singh into trouble. S. Kishan Singh reached Plahi at midnight on Chanda Singh's well.<sup>132</sup> He wrote the whole incident for the Gargaj Akali to be published in it and sent the same to its Editor, Bhai Teja Singh of Buchar through Chanda Singh. From Plahi, he reached Pragpur and taking Babu Santa Singh

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130. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(Mss. ).p.101.

131. Ibid., Ch.14. Sunder Singh was sentenced to 1½ years for keeping kirpan, cartridges and for delivering seditious lectures whereas Arjan Singh was imprisoned for 6 months. Later on, Sunder Singh was included as one of the accused in the Babbar Akali case and the persons who had helped in arresting him were rewarded. Six persons got a square of land and Rs. 100/- each. Three Lambardars got a cash reward of Rs. 100/- each.

132. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.), Ch.14.

alongwith him went to Patara to seek the advice of Master Mota Singh, <sup>Karam Singh</sup> of Jhingar, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal, Kartar Singh of Gondpur and Harbans Singh of Sirhala, too, had reached there. It was proposed to set Sundh on fire but Master Mota Singh advised against this as it would have brought notoriety to the Chakarvartis and they would have lost the sympathy and support of the common people.<sup>133</sup>

The arrest of Sunder Singh came as a rude shock to the Chakarvartis. They pondered over this and decided to warn the toadies so that they might not follow the footsteps of the people of Sundh.

The group led by Karam Singh had been also active since 1920. Karam Singh of Daulatpur arranged a political conference in Mehatpur as it could not be held in his own village due to prohibition imposed u/s 144.<sup>134</sup> He was helped by Assa Singh of Phakrudi, another returned emigrant from Canada.<sup>135</sup> The forcible seizure of the keys of Golden Temple took place on 7th November 1921.<sup>136</sup> On 15th November, 1921, they had attended Nankana fair in connection with the birth of Guru Nanak Devji and were enthused to listen to the speeches of Baba Gurdit Singh of Koma Gata Maru and Master Mota Singh.<sup>137</sup>

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133. Makhsuspari, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.80.

134. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, Statement of Assa Singh, p.215.

135. Ibid., p.216. also Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.115.

136. Ibid., p.135.

137. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.216.

Then Assa Singh, Karam Singh of Jhingar, and Karam Singh of Daulatpur arranged a political diwan in Jhingar and as a result of this diwan, their arrest warrants were issued. They became chakarvartis and an incessant chain of lectures started. In a lecture at Balachaur Karam Singh of Daulatpur was alleged to have told that they would take over the courts and a Sikh would take the place of the British Deputy Commissioner. Assa Singh confessed having recited the poem written by Karam Singh of Daulatpur in which the Indians were asked to awake as their country was being ruined.<sup>138</sup> This was followed by a diwan at Mahal Gahla and Navanshehar in January 1922. Then the group went to Chak Sangha where Inder Singh, a returned emigrant, joined them and next they met Bhai Udey Singh of Rangarh Jhuggian. In February 1922, a lecture was delivered at Langroa where Assa Singh openly asked the people not to pay land revenue and exhorted the audience to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales. He also visited Anandpur at the time of Hola Mohalla and heard Kishan Singh's lecture. He admitted that he had bought 3 feet long Kirpan under the inspiration of his lecture.<sup>139</sup>

This group included some very daring individuals of whom its leading light, Karam Singh of Daulatpur, was a staunch

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138. Loc.cit.

139. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.217.

advocate of violence and remained so till the end. He started a factory to prepare swords in his own house and arranged the meetings and diwans, to propagate his views, in Daulatpur. Rajowal, Dianatpur, Kotli, Jassowal, Bachouri, Garhi Kanungoan and Rakkar Bet. Rattan Singh of Rakkar was a notable militant who came under his spell and astounded the Doaba in the thirties by his heroic exploits.<sup>140</sup> This group decided in its meeting at Sadhara on April 13, 1922 to 'reform' the toadies.<sup>141</sup>

The meeting was attended by S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Karam Singh of Jhingar, Dalip Singh of Sadhara, Udey Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian, Dharam Singh and Surjan Singh of Hayatpur Rurki. It was their first Gurmata. In the last week of May, Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Udey Singh, Harnam Singh of Garhi Kanungoan, Dalip Singh of Sadhara, Bawa Singh and Udham Singh of Kaulgarh and Asa Singh met in the Haveli of Udham Singh at Kaulgarh.

The arrest of Sunder Singh and the mounting pressure of the toadies sent a wave of shock among the militants. It was proposed that a newspaper be brought out to propagate their views to make people conscious of their duty. Karam Singh of Daulatpur also urged the necessity of procuring weapons and reforming the toadies, who were getting the Akalis arrested.<sup>142</sup>

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140. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.7.

141. Ibid., p.11.

142. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.81.

This decision was like the Sangowal decision of Kishan Singh group, though taken independently. But Assa Singh dissented to the proposal of murdering toadies and of staging a rebellion against the Britishers. His views were based on the fact that they neither had any weapons nor money nor could they look for assistance to any native state while the government had troops and guns.<sup>143</sup> This irked others, especially Bhai Uday Singh who called Assa Singh timid and insisted that the suggestion of Karam Singh be carried out.<sup>144</sup> Though no final and formal decision could be agreed upon yet the consensus for a strong step against the toadies was desideratum.

**Basiala Meeting:** This showed that some of the members of Karam Singh group were looking to Kishan Singh for advice. It was not incidentally that Dalip Singh of Sadhara and Assa Singh met Kishan Singh at Basiala soon after the Kaulgarh meeting. Kishan Singh agreed with them that the time to murder jholichuks was not ripe then, yet there was need to intensify propaganda activities to fan the public feelings. Master Dalip Singh of Gossal, Babu Santa Singh and Karam Singh of Jhingar were also present there. All went to Daulatpur to meet Karam Singh so that common programme be chalked out. But Karam Singh was not

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143. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.217.

144. Dr. Kamlesh Mohan, The Journal of Regional History, p.150 is wrong in calling both Assa Singh and Ude Singh as dissidents. Only Assa Singh dissented and sought the advice of Kishan Singh at Basiala.



available, so all left for Hayatpur where Assa Singh introduced Surjan Singh, Dharam Singh and Sunder Singh to Kishan Singh.<sup>145</sup> Next day, they left for Moranwali and then proceeded to Patara where they met Master Mota Singh, Santa Singh, Lal Singh, Rajinder Kaur w/o Lal Singh, Hari Singh Jullunduri and Bhag Singh, a book-seller of Jullundur. Hari Singh used to write articles against Kishan Singh and Karam Singh of Jhingar, branding them informers as being on the pay-roll of Nabha and Patiala States. Master Mota Singh told him that they were not informers of the States and were good workers of the Panth.<sup>146</sup> Kishan Singh deputed Assa Singh to arrange Karam Singh's meeting with him for chalking out a concrete programme. In the month of May, 1922 two incidents crystallised the approach of the Chakarvartis towards the toadies. Kishan Singh group in pursuance of its Sangoval decision of March 19, 1922 and Rajoval decision of March 24, 1922, attacked Harnam Singh of Mehdiapur on May 20, 1922. Hazara Singh s/o Inder Singh, Hazara Singh s/o Sher Singh, of Munder, Chajja Singh of Massanian and Amar Singh of Rajoval participated in the action. It was an eye opener and was the first offensive of the militant Akalis against those people who were acting as ears and eyes of the

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145. Surjan Singh was brother of Dalip Singh of Sadhara's wife. Sunder Singh and Dharam Singh were her nephew, vide Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p. (71) Karam Singh's group was strongly linked with Dalip Singh and it can be deduced that it was a progeny of Nirwair Shahid Sewak Jatha, Doaba.

146. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.220.

bureaucracy. The Daulatpur group was also thinking on similar lines in its Kaulgarh meeting but in June, 1922, Master Mota Singh's arrest whipped up their fury against the toadies and it proved helpful in the formation of the Babbar Akali Jatha.

Arrest of Master Mota Singh: Master Mota Singh<sup>147</sup> was the nucleus round which the militant movement revolved. The then Government of India was anxious about his arrest. S.P.O. Donnell wrote from Delhi on behalf of the Government of India on 30th March, 1922 to the Chief Secretary, Panjab, Mr. S. Wilson Johnstone to make special effort to arrest Master Mota Singh.<sup>148</sup> The Panjab Government deputed C.I.D. special police and raised reward of Rs. 1000/- already announced to Rs. 3,000/- to arrest him.<sup>149</sup> The police were instructed to arrest him from anywhere, at any cost. On 22nd February, 1922, too, efforts were made to arrest him. Bhan Singh of Birring and Sant Kartar Singh of Pragpur, coming from Jullundur railway station, were mistaken for Master Mota Singh and Kishan Singh. The police followed them to Birring. The houses of S. Kishan Singh and Bhan Singh were searched by the police who found nothing but disappointment.<sup>150</sup> At last this case was taken in hand by

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147. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.), Ch.15.

148. Sadhu Singh, Master Mota Singh ji, (Jiwani), op.cit., p.80.

149. Loc.cit.

150. Sadhu Singh, Master Mota Singh ji, op.cit.p.80.  
Also, vide letter of S.Kishan Singh Gargaj published in the Akali, May, 1922.

Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Aziz who succeeded in arresting him on June 16, 1922.<sup>151</sup> About 800 strong military and police force practically besieged Patara on 16th June, 1922, at 8.30 a.m. on the information received from Isher Singh.<sup>152</sup> The police practically conducted search thrice in the village but could not find him anywhere. Giani Ram Singh Teghdari<sup>h</sup> had hidden him in a big basket, covered it and carried him off to his well, pretending to bring sugar cakes from his well, where can-crusher was working. On reaching there, Master Mota Singh changed his mind, thinking of police brutality over his village brethren; he, then, offered himself for arrest.<sup>153</sup> He was brutally beaten because F.C. Isemonger, D.I.G. as well as Sir Edward Maclagan, Governor of the Panjab, were firmly of the view that his speeches were responsible for all the turmoil and trouble in the Doaba-Bist Jullundur. The Chakravartis suspected the hand of Arjan Singh s/o Charat Singh Patwari of Haripur, Fauja Singh Havaladar of Chhajalwadi and Pritam 'Mast' of Sihour (Patiala) in Master Mota Singh's arrest.<sup>154</sup> Gurbachan Singh Giani of Amritsar alleged the involvement of a member of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee but this was strongly refuted by S. Kartar Singh Jhabbar who was in

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151. Home-Political, File No.1/X/1924

152. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, June 19, 1922.

153. Sadhu Singh, Master Mota Singh ji, Jiwani, op.cit., p.80.

154. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.15.

Patara on June 16, 1922 and according to his eye-witness account Master Mota Singh offered himself for arrest at about 2 p.m.<sup>155</sup> It was never conclusively ascertained as to who passed on the information about Master Mota Singh to the police leading to the police raid on his village. It was now evident that the greedy persons were on the prowl to get the Chakarvartis arrested. The police was becoming more and more active and this required Chakarvartis to make concerted bid to create an awe and spread terror among their antagonists including the police and the toadies.

While Kishan Singh's group had opened its account by attacking Harnam Singh, Zaildar of Mehdipur, to settle scores with the toadies, the other group headed by S. Karam Singh, too robbed Kaka Singh, Lambardar of Bachauri on July 3, 1922 of the Government revenue of Rs. 570/- and annas two.<sup>156</sup> This amount was utilised to purchase arms<sup>157</sup> and a cyclostyle machine<sup>158</sup> called "Safari Press" to intensify propaganda against the rulers. This was the work of Sardar Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Labh Singh, Prem Singh of Daulatpur and Bhai Uday Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian and

155. The Akali, Lahore, June 21 and July 1922.

156. Makhaspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.126 mentioned the amount as Rs. 575, but Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.), p.97 gives the correct amount as Rs. 570 and annas two.

157. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.16.

158. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss.), p.77.

others.<sup>159</sup> Though Kaka Lambardar impleaded nine persons in the robbery case yet only Labh Singh was challaned and he, too, was, later on, acquitted for want of an eye witness.

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159. Ibid., Ch.17. But Makhsuspari, S.E., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.126 and Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Lehr n, op.cit., p.311 make mention of Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Bhai Udey Singh of Bangarh Jhuggian, Harnam Singh of Rurka and Prem Singh of Majo (District Patiala) in this action.



## VI

ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP, PLAN AND PROGRAMME OF THE BABBAR JATHA

The Chakarvartis felt the necessity of merging their Jathas so that the activities of the toadies and police be counteracted effectively. The programme of the Chakarvarti jathas of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj as well as that of S. Karam Singh Daulatpur was almost similar. Both had tried to intimidate the toadies in their own way. Both felt the necessity of money to buy weapons. Both were seriously considering to bring out some journal to give wide publicity to their views. The leaders of both the jathas were known to each other and had taken part in the divans held at Kot Fatuhi and Chamkaur Sahib. The arrest of S. Sunder Singh Makhsuspari on May 11, 1922 and that of Master Mota Singh on 16th June, 1922 precipitated the matter and impelled the Chakarvartis to follow a common programme by merging their groups into a single party. There were certain members like Assa Singh who worked alongwith both the groups. With their help, the steps were taken to organise Chakarvartis afresh.

Towards Unity:

Jathedar Kishan Singh deputed Assa Singh to bring S. Karam Singh to the house of one Hazara Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh within 10 or 12 days for the meeting. Assa Singh was able to locate S. Karam Singh in the house of Nigahia

Singh in Khuradpur. He conveyed him Jathedar Kishan Singh's message. S. Karam Singh told Assa Singh that he would meet them on 9th July, 1922 at the wedding of Mihan Singh's daughter at Hayatpur. Jathedar Kishan Singh alongwith Assa Singh reached Hayatpur on July 9, 1922, but Karam Singh did not reach there as the police had arrived there to investigate the robbery of Ram Ditta nee Kaka Lambardar of Bachauri. They stayed with Dharam Singh there and left for Kishanpura next day early in the morning. Karam Singh of Jhingar was already there. They all held diwans and delivered lectures in the villages of Pindori Phagorian, Pragpur, Jansar and Haripur. On their way to Lallian, they met Babu Santa Singh, Sadhu Singh, Udham Singh and Nirwair Singh of Pindori Nijjaran. At Lallian, they also delivered lectures and recited poems. Then they left for Baba Bakala. From Baba Bakala, Karam Singh Jhingar, Kishan Singh, Udham Singh of Pindori Nijjaran and Assa Singh went to Amritsar and stayed there for four days. There they met S.S. Charan Singh, editor of "Jathedar" and S. Ram Singh Dharawal, editor of "Ajit". The editors of both these papers were consulted about bringing out a newspaper but both advised Kishan Singh against the project.<sup>1</sup>

On their return from Amritsar, Jathedar Kishan Singh again sent Assa Singh to locate S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur. Assa Singh reached his village Phakrudi, got the clue from

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1. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.222  
(Statement of Assa Singh)

Ali Mohammad, an oilman and found Karam Singh and Udey Singh there. Karam Singh who had in the meantime brought out two issues of the Babbar Akali Doaba, gave Assa Singh some copies of the same for Kishan Singh and desired that Kishan Singh should meet him immediately. Assa Singh reached Pindori Nijjaran where he found Santa Singh, Karam Singh Jhingar, Dalip Singh of Gossal, Sadhu Singh, Nirvair Singh, Udham Singh and Jathedar Kishan Singh. Jathedar Kishan Singh appreciated Karam Singh for having brought out the 'Babbar Akali Doaba Akhbar'. Then all set out to the fixed place near Rehsiwal to meet Karam Singh<sup>2</sup> and plan the next phase of their programme.<sup>3</sup>

#### Formation of the Babbar Akali Jatha:

In August 1922 both the Chakravarti Jathas were merged. Since then it had been given the nomenclature of Babbar Jatha. It was after the name of 'Babbar Akali Doaba Akhbar'. Since then 'Babbar' became a part and parcel of the movement of the militant Akalis and invariably stuck to Karam Singh who was the nomenclator of the movement as well as the founder of the paper. He came to be called either 'Babbar' or 'Editor', henceforth.

The meeting took place in the cottage of Sant Thakur Singh at Rajowal in the holy presence of Sri Guru Granth

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2. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.86.

3. Babbar Akali Case Judgement, 1925, p.135.

Sahib.<sup>4</sup> The prominent among those who participated were S. Karam Singh, Editor, Bhai Uday Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian, Jathedar Kishan Singh 'Gargaj', S. Karam Singh of Jhingar, Assa Singh of Phakrudi, Babu Santa Singh, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal and Atma Singh of Bika. It was decided there to form an executive committee to chalk out further programme. The questions of bringing out the newspaper, of procuring weapons, collecting of funds and keeping an account of the funds were also considered. In the meeting, S. Kishan Singh, Dalip Singh Gossal and Babu Santa Singh were elected President, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. The Working Committee included Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Uday Singh among others.<sup>5</sup> The decisions of this meeting were momentous. This meeting transformed the groups into a party. They had now one leader, one party and one policy.

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4. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.87; Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.18; Dr. Kawlesh Mohan, The Babbar Akalis (Journal of Regional History, Vol.I, 1980, p.150 and Dr. Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., p.117 have mentioned the place as Gajjowal but this is inaccurate and erroneous. All sources are unanimous that the meeting <sup>was held</sup> at Sant Thakar Singh's Kutiya and that Kutiya was at Rajjowal. Vide, Paper Book Akali Conspiracy case, p.55.

5. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.87. Also vide, Babbar Akali case Judgement, p.148.

There is, however, no unanimity about the office-bearers. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh, (Mss), op.cit., p.17. mentioned Karam Singh Jhingar as treasurer, whereas Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh, Babbar Akali, p.48. mentions the office bearer as under:

President : Karam Singh Daulatpur  
 Vice-Presidents: i) Kishan Singh  
 ii) Karam Singh.

f.n.contd...

Karam Singh of Daulatpur had already brought out two issues of the paper: 'Babbar Akali Doaba'. These issues highlighted the misrule of the foreigners, poverty of the country, cruelty of the Britishers and utter supinelessness of the Akali and Congress parties. This was a sort of manifesto of the extremist Akalis and it defined their plan, policy and programme. Jathedar Kishan Singh, though he praised Karam Singh for having brought out the Babbar Akali Doaba because such leaflets were the need of the hour, yet he pointed out that there was room for improvement. In his view the objectives and aims of the organisation were not properly brought out. He remarked that they would not appeal to the educated classes.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, Jathedar Kishan Singh was authorised to bring out the 'Akhbar'. Though E. Karam Singh remained de-jure Editor, yet it was Kishan Singh Gargaj who was its de-facto Editor. The Babbar Akali leaflet was brought out on August 20-22, 1922.<sup>7</sup> Jathedar Kishan Singh got the duplicator brought from Phakrudī and called Udham Singh

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f.n1 5 contd:

Treasurers	: 1) Master Dalip Singh ii) Santa Singh
Granthi	: Dhanna Singh
Commander	: Uday Singh
Jamadar	: Atma Singh Bika
Postman	: Zaila Singh, Jassowal.

This does not seem to be correct. Dhanna Singh became member later on in early 1923, whereas Kishan Singh had been the acknowledged leader. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.21 is<sup>not</sup> correct in giving the date of election as October 1922. He has also not been corroborated by the living Babbars about the place of the meeting and personnel of the committee. According to him Karam Singh and Kishan Singh were President and Vice-President respectively. He mentions Dalip Singh and Uday Singh as Secretary and Joint-Secretary, Karam Singh Jhingar as treasurer and Santa Singh as Granthi.

6. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, case p.223.

7. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.16.



from Pindori Nijjaran to write its stencils. The place of publication was given 'forest' and thus its third issue was brought out on August 24, 1922.

S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur and Bhai Uday Singh were entrusted with the task of organising a squad to reform the jholichuks. Master Dalip Singh of Gossal, Babu Santa Singh and Assa Singh were asked to carry on the propaganda for it on a war-footing. Jathedar Kishan Singh took upon himself the duty of preparing a list of jholichuks in Jullundur area whereas the Editor was asked to prepare the same of Kandi area i.e. Sub-montane region. The Jatha, henceforth, came to be called the Babbar Akali Jatha. During that period, they had not a separate entity of their own and were considered as a part and parcel of the Akalis. In fact, they were a revolutionary group of the Akalis. The number of the Babbar Akalis was considerable and in the Doaba it was overwhelmingly large. According to S. Labh Singh of Jassowal, diary of S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur mentioned the total strength of the Babbars as 55,000.<sup>8</sup> Professor Teja Singh in his speech at the Congress session of 1922 held at Gaya mentioned that its strength was 40,000.<sup>9</sup> This may be an inflated figure and an over-estimate but the help they received from the villagers clearly pointed to their hold over the masses. In fact, the number of the actual activists

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8. Labh Singh, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.12.

9. Teja Singh, Arsi, Amritsar, 1958, p.64.

seemed to be much smaller. It was not merely seven, but was certainly not more than 500.<sup>10</sup> Diwan Durga Dass of Kapurthala State produced a diary of the Babbar Akalis in the court of Mr. L.A. Bull, Special Magistrate, Lahore wherein it was claimed if 500 revolutionaries came in the field they could overthrow the Government.<sup>11</sup>

In the beginning of September, 1922 Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, Karam Singh Editor, Karam Singh of Jhingar, Dalip Singh of Gossal, Asa Singh and Baba Santa Singh met at Rajowal at Phakur Singh's Kutiya and planned to go to Amritsar to collect funds. On their way to Amritsar, they first, passed through Kishanpura and then reached Randhawa Masandan. They met Basant Singh and handed over to him two guns of S. Karam Singh Daulatpur. Then they boarded the train from Suran-nissi for Amritsar. At Amritsar, they met Bhai Teja Singh of Bhuchar and S. Ram Singh of Dharowal.<sup>12</sup> Another duplicator was purchased out of Rs. 150/- received as an aid from Ram Singh of Dharowal.<sup>13</sup> Babu Santa Singh was sent to Lahore who

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10. Jasakha Singh, Malwa Itiha, Vol.III, p.1053 (Statement of Babu Santa Singh).

11. The Akali (Urdu), December 9, 1923.

12. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh, (MSS), op.cit., p.111.

13. Paper book, Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p. 681, It was confirmed by the statement of Jagjit Singh S/C Hira Singh Manager, Panjab and Sindh Bank, Amritsar, who told the court that Cheque No.46176 of Rs.150/- of 8th November, 1922 related to the Pass Book of S. Ram Singh of Dharowal and was in favour of Bhai Santa Singh.

bought it for Rs. 105/- from Lahore.<sup>14</sup>

The programme of the Babbar Akali Jatha was chalked out on well defined lines. They advocated the intensification of their propaganda campaign by printing the Babbar Akali Dosha on these duplicators. Meanwhile, the Akalis launched Guru Ka Bagh morcha.

This morcha was launched on 9th August, 1922 and it lasted till November 17, 1922. In this morcha, 5605 Sikhs were arrested. The morcha was unique in its execution and consequences. The attitude of Mr. Mackpherson and Mr. E.G.M. Beatty who were Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent of police, Amritsar respectively during the morcha, irked the Sikhs so much so that a section of them openly came in the field to seek revenge for the insults heaped on the peaceful Akalis. Mr. J.M. Dunnet and Mr. Jenkins (acting D.C. of Amritsar) gave wide reins to the police to display their repressive measures like pulling out the 'Keshas'. The leader of the Babbar Akalis, S. Kishan Singh Gargaj in a letter to Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee exhorted it to allow the Sikhs to wield the sword. The Government was aware of this and even the Viceroy of India, Lord Reading<sup>15</sup>

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14. Ibid, p.619. Also vide Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.94, Elam's duplicator was purchased from Panjab Religion Book Society, Lahore. Milkhi Ram, owner of the firm confirmed this.

15. <sup>Rufus</sup> Issacs, The Earl of Reading was the Viceroy of India from April 2, 1921 to April 3, 1926. His tenure, strangely, synchronised with the rise and fall of the Babbar Akali Movement.

conceded this in a letter to the Secretary of the State. The letter read: 'At first the gang devoted energies to revolutionary propaganda. Meetings were held under the cloak of religious assemblies, violent speeches were delivered and in September 1922, during Guru Ka Bagh struggle, cyclostyled leaflets entitled "Babbar Akali Doaba Akhbar" prepared secretly in different villages of Jullundur Doab were distributed at Amritsar and elsewhere. Similar leaflets and articles appeared in more extreme papers under the signature of Jathedar Kishan Singh. These leaflets exhorted the Akalis to abandon non-violent creed, to revolt and kill foreigners and establish free government. Soldiers were also incited to murder their officers.<sup>16</sup> They sent their message to the masses through the Babbar Akali Doaba'. If diwans had successfully conveyed the radical ideas of the Chakarvartis and stirred the peasantry against the toadies, the publication of the Babbar Akali Doaba augmented and incensed their wrath against the bureaucracy and its props. The soldiers were also being indoctrinated and the peasantry was growing bold. The first issue was brought out on 20th August, 1922, whereas the last one entirely the work of Babu Santa<sup>singh</sup> was brought out on May 21, 1923.<sup>17</sup> In all, there were 15 issues brought out on Safari and Udaru Press, as both Elam Duplicators

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16. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923,p.75.

17. Babbar Akali case judgement, 1925,p.10.

were called.<sup>18</sup> Each issue, except one, began with a couplet<sup>19</sup> which meant that only he who would fight and die for his faith would be considered a hero. These issues deepened the sense of indignation against the British injustice and oppression and prepared the people for the sacrifices and instilled in them the sentiments of patriotism. The alacrity and secrecy with which these were printed and distributed, free of cost, popularised not only the Babbar Akali Akhbar, but also made the Babbar Akali Jatha an object of hope for the masses. It referred to the government and the Europeans in foul and abusive terms bordering vituperation. The loyalists were contemptuously called toadies and parties like the Akali Dal and Congress were ridiculed for following non-violent policy cowardly. The writers and contributors were mainly those who were deeply involved in the movement such as Jathedar Kishan Singh, S.Karam Singh Daulatpur, Amar Singh Kot Fatuhi, Piara Singh Granthi, Hari Singh Chela and Arjan Singh 'Sach' of Kharaudi, Babu Santa Singh and Master Dalip Singh of Gossal. The distribution was mainly the work of Assa Singh of Phakrud

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18. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.16 and Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.60 mention that, Elam's duplicator which was at first styled the "Safari Press", later came to be called "Udaru Press", is not tenable. The two different names to two different machines were given to differentiate them. The first was purchased by Karam Singh's group out of the money robbed from Kaka Lambardar of Bachauri whereas the second was purchased with the help of S.Ram Singh of Dharowal.

19. "Sura So Pehchaniye, Jo Lare Din Ke Het, Purza Purza Kat Mare, Kabhu na Chhadde Khet."



and Atma Singh of Bika.<sup>20</sup>

The different issues of the Babbar Akali Doaba highlighted the views and programme of the Babbar Akalis. In Babbar Akali Doaba of 24th August 1922, the plight of the Sikhs groaning under the oppressive rule was highlighted and the Sikhs were asked to give up their complacent attitude. It advocated unity and exhorted the Hindus and Muslims to join the Khalsa to stage an uprising. No time was to be lost.<sup>21</sup>

In its issue of September 21, 1922 the nostalgic references to their heroic past were made and the Sikhs were ridiculed for their indifference to the desecration of the Gurdwaras,<sup>22</sup> their subservience to the tyrannical rule of the British. In September, 1922 when Guru Ka Bagh morcha was in full swing, the Babbar Akali leaders exhorted the Akalis to abandon non-violence. They sent the volunteers to distribute Babbar Akali leaflets. The SGPC officials were alleged to have insulted even the volunteers.<sup>23</sup> The 'Panjab Darpan' and the 'Akali Te Pardesi' also viewed the Babbar

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20. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.91.

21. The Tribune, Lahore, October 6, 1923, p.9 (Translation of the Babbar Akali leaflet August 24, 1922).

22. The Tribune Lahore, October 6, 1923, p.10 (Translation of the Babbar Akali, September 21, 1922).

23. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.17.

Akali movement with suspicion and anti-pathy.<sup>24</sup> The attitude of the Akali Dal and SGPC was unsympathetic towards the Babbar Akalis. The Babbar Akalis, too, condemned SGPC for squandering the funds of the Sikh Panth<sup>25</sup> and they appealed the Akalis to follow the path shown by the martyrs like Bhai Mani Singh and warriors like Akali Phula Singh and S. Hari Singh Nalwa.<sup>26</sup> Though the SGPC, at the behest of the Panjab Government, had issued a statement repudiating the doctrine of violence preached in the Babbar Akali leaflets,<sup>27</sup> yet the violence had won many adherents partly through terrorisation and partly through popular sympathy with the success and growing prestige of the Babbar Akalis.<sup>28</sup>

The Babbars, who were sore at the collaboration of the loyalists and the rulers, printed the names of the informers in their paper warning them about the consequences with a view to demoralising them. It certainly created nervouness among the loyalists.<sup>29</sup>

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24. Loc. cit.

25. The Tribune, Lahore, 7 October 1923 (Translation of the Babbar Akali leaflet of October 20, 1922).

26. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p. 11.

27. Home Political, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 81.

28. Ibid., p. 75.

29. Ibid., p. 28.

The formation of the Babbar Jatha and duplication of its leaflets soon caught the eye of the Government. Mr. C.W.Jacob who was Deputy Commissioner, Jullundur from July 1922 to 1924 conceded that he received reports from the villagers that certain armed and extremist Akalis were going about the district, terrorising the people and making anti-government speeches in August 1922. It was in September that a villager from Nawanshehar Tehsil brought two Babbar Akali leaflets which were most violent and threatened the loyalists with all sorts of penalties and dire consequences, if they remained loyal to the British Government.<sup>30</sup>

As the situation was growing from bad to worse, he wrote to D.I.G., C.I.D. towards the end of the September 1922 informing him of what was taking place and asked him that unless some special measures were taken, the murder of the loyalists could not be ruled out before long.<sup>31</sup> Khan Sahib Mir Fazal Imam was then sent by D.I.G. to Jullundur to cooperate with the district police and take such measures as were necessary to deal with the situation. Soonafter, the D.I.G. himself visited Jullundur and a conference was held there in which the police of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur districts took part. Various measures were decided on and among others

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30. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.766.

31. Loc.cit.

it was decided to increase the rewards already being offered for the apprehension of the members of the Babbar Jatha. The situation, however, grew worse and the prevalence of terrorism in the district continued unabated. The same state of affairs prevailed in the neighbouring district of Hoshiarpur. The police were distinctly alarmed; to cope with the situation drastic measures were needed. Mr. F.C. Isenonger, D.I.G., C.I.D. P.N. 431 vouchsafed these views and corroborated that a meeting between D.C. Jullundur, Khan Bahadur Seikh Abdul-Aziz, Khan Sahib Mir Fazal Imam, S.P. Hoshiarpur and Jullundur and other police officers of the two districts was held in November 1922. In this meeting decisions were taken to adopt more stringent measures for the suppression of the movement. It was also decided to offer alluring rewards for the arrest of Jathedar Kishan Singh and Karam Singh and other leading Akalis who were absconding from justice. Kishan Singh was an absconder in the case of crown v/s Tota Singh. The other members were also absconders as proceedings were started against them for having delivered inflammatory speeches.<sup>32</sup> On 30th November, 1922, the rewards were announced for the apprehension of the Babbar Akalis. The biggest reward of Rs. 2000/- was offered for the arrest of Kishan Singh Gargaj, while the reward for the arrest of Karam Singh Daulatpur was Rs. 1000/-

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32. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.762.

The reward for the arrest of Karam Singh of Jhingar and Dalip Singh of Gossal was Rs. 500/- each. The smallest reward of Rs. 250/- was offered for the apprehension of Assa Singh. The hand bills were also extensively distributed in the villages of Doaba Bist Jullundur.<sup>33</sup>

The announcement of the rewards for the arrest of the Babbars put them on the offensive. They launched a virulent campaign against the informers and touts of the police and it was decided to exterminate the toadies as their greed was likely to create difficulties in the way of the Babbars. Consequently, on December 25, 1922 a general meeting of the Babbar Jatha took place in the Haveli of S. Hardit Singh of Jassowal.<sup>34</sup> It was attended by Jathedar Kishan Singh, Dalip Singh of Gossal, Karam Singh of Jhingar, Babu Santa Singh, S. Karam Singh Daulatpur, Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Uday Singh, Buta Singh Pindori Nijjaran, Asa Singh, Amar Singh Kot Fatuhi, Hari Singh, Labh Singh and Karam Singh of Jassowal.<sup>35</sup>

Kishan Singh informed that the propaganda had aroused

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33. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.107.

34. Hardit Singh of Jassowal in his interview on 8.9.83 to the writer disclosed that the first meeting took place in his Haveli on December 25, while the second on 30-31 December, 1922, was held in the Kutiya of Sant Charan Singh. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh (MSS.) writes that the venue of the first meeting was the Kutiya of Sant Charan Singh Jassowal where as Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.96 held the view that it was held in Hari Singh's Haveli.

35. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit. p.96.



the sentiments of people and they had veered round to their views and had grown sympathetic to the movement. It had unnerved the police. The rewards for the arrest of the Babbars had been proclaimed and it was very likely that the village folk be put behind the bars for the offence of supplying food and basic necessities to the Babbars. He stressed the need to put into practice the Babbar programme of reforming the toadies, forestalling the official attempts to torpedo the Babbar organisation, threatening the police action and striking terror among the pro-government elements in the villages. He declared that their movement would make headway only if the notorious informers, hirelings and toadies were reformed. He made it clear that the Babbar movement was on the crossroads. There in the meeting, it was decided:

- 1) To bring out the next issue of the Babbar Akali Doaba, the same day and the decision of reforming the sycophants or jholichuks was to be published in it.
- 2) Arjan Singh Patwari was to be liquidated.<sup>36</sup>
- 3) The plan to attack jholichuks was to be prepared by the working committee and this was to be published in Kalgidhar Number of the Babbar Akali Doaba and all the members were required to execute the programme.<sup>37</sup>

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36. Ibid., p.97.

37. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p.98.

The next meeting was held on December 30-31, 1922. The working committee decided that no members should initiate any arbitrary action; if a toady met, all of a sudden, then the members should take action as the situation warranted; neither the belonging of the toadies were to be removed, nor their children and women-folk to be dishonoured. The members were asked to execute the directive of the working committee giving it priority. The Gurmata of chopping of the noses and ears of the toadies was withdrawn. However, it allowed the Babbar Akalis to plunder the property of the Government, the informers, the touts, the toadies and notorious money-lenders.<sup>38</sup> Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran mentions the convening of a third meeting at Jassowal wherein Santa Singh had pleaded for the distribution of the share of the booty to the members to attract more persons, but Jathedar Kishan Singh rejected the proposal.<sup>39</sup>

If the Babbars were busy in launching the offensive, the bureaucratic machinery was not napping or dozing. It soon started to reassert the authority of the law against the Babbar Akalis. The loyalists were worming into the Babbar inner circle and could cause much disaster. It visualised three-pronged attack: (i) The toadies were asked to step up anti-Babbar propaganda. (ii) More police was deployed to protect the loyalists and (iii) The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee was pressurized to condemn the Babbar activities.

38. The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, October 31, 1923.  
 39. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh (MSF), Ch.26.

The Government strategy had begun to work. Sant Kartar Singh of Pragpur, who had been very helpful at the nascent stage of the movement and had lent a helping hand to Kishan Singh, was arrested u/s 107 in June 1922. He was imprisoned for a year but he got his release after a murky deal in November, 1922. His conduct, since then, was more dangerous even than that of the toadies. He started playing a double game. On January 24, 1923 he informed the police when Jathedar Kishan Singh was putting up in the Haveli of Bela Singh Pragpur. He also threw a hint to Kishan Singh that Bela Singh's Haveli was the target of police surveillance. At the dead of night Kishan Singh slipped away and thus had a narrow escape from the clutches of the police.

The lavish promises of the rewards had a strong temptation and even blood relations began to betray. On 5th January, 1923, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Dalip Singh of Gossal were arrested at the instance of Kehar Singh,<sup>40</sup> real brother of Karam Singh from his house. They were persecuted u/s 124 A and 153A. Karam Singh Jhingar was sentenced to 4 years' S. Dalip Singh to 5 years' term.<sup>41</sup> Later on, they were tried alongwith other Babbars.

The programme of setting right and reforming the Jholichuks was taken in hand to implement the decisions taken

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40. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.22 and Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.49 give the name of Jhingar's brother as Hattan Singh. This is not correct.

41. Karam Singh and Dalip Singh were awarded life sentence in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

at Jassowal. Karam Singh Babbar had prepared a list of 179 toadies. The first in the list was Arjan Singh Patwari allegedly responsible for the arrest of Master Mota Singh, but he could never be murdered.<sup>42</sup> The first attempt was made on 16th January, 1923. Three different groups under Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Santa Singh and Jathedar Kishan Singh respectively failed to catch him in their net. Another attempt on January 23, 1923, too proved abortive.<sup>43</sup> Later on, the plan to murder him seems to have been dropped. Master Mota Singh is said to have sent a message through Munsha Singh of Johal that none of the suspects, supposed to be responsible for his arrest, be murdered. Perhaps, all the suspected informers had met him in jail to clarify their position.<sup>44</sup>

It was on February 2, 1923 that the Babbars committed a dacoity in the house and shop of Munshi Ram of Jadla.<sup>45</sup> The final prayers were said by Karam Singh Daulatpur. The party consisted of 21 persons.<sup>46</sup> This attempt did not bring them any

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42. Home Political, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 75.

43. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp. 128-29.

44. Sadhu Singh Patara, Master Mota Singhji Jiwani, op.cit., pp. 168-69.

45. Op.cit., p. 130.

46. Loc.cit. The group consisted of S. Karam Singh, Banta Singh, Thakur Singh, Hari Singh, Waryam Singh and Mistri Gurbachan Singh of Daulatpur, Bhai Udey Singh of Ram Garh Jhugian, Waryam Singh, Kartar Singh, Ram Singh Chhota, Ram Singh Wadda of Muzara Kalan, Assa Singh of Phakrudi, Ram Singh, Sunder Singh, Surjan Singh, Dharam Singh of Hayatpur, Gurbachan Singh of Sadhara, Hari Singh, Hardit Singh, Harbakhsh Singh of Jassowal and Amar Singh of Mandhiani.

worthwhile financial gain as Munshi Ram had nothing at hand and had already sent Rs. 22000/- to Nawan Shehar. Only two ornaments, a chain of gold and an amulet of silver, fell in their hands. These were mortgaged with Partapa, brother of Assa Singh for Rs. 180/-. This amount was spent on buying a gun, 25 cartridges and 2 swords from Nahan.<sup>47</sup> On 10th February, 1923 Bishan Singh, Zaildar of Rani Thua (Kapurthala State), a retired official of canal department, was shot dead near his village.<sup>48</sup> His name appeared in the Babbar hit list at serial No.141. He was instrumental in getting arrested or insulted each and every one who wore a black turban. He was rewarded with a watch and a sword for his services rendered to the government against the Akalis. The people had complained against him in a diwan at Buhani in March 1922. Again, it was he, at whose instance the police at Khajurala post subjected Bakhshish Singh Akali to severe thrashing and third degree torture. The threat of boycott by the Akalis at Phagwara and Khajurala divans did not deter him.<sup>49</sup> Karam Singh of Daulatpur sent Kartar Singh, Sardul Singh of Burro Barrian and Babu Santa Singh to reform Bishan Singh. The group set out for the task after performing 'Ardasa'. When they reached near Palahi, Kartar Singh and Sardul Singh entered the village to get meals prepared and Santa Singh was left to keep an eye on the Zaildar alighting

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47. Home Political K.W.2 File No.245/1926, p.75.

48. Home Political, File No.134/II/1923.p.76.

49. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.23.



the train at the railway station. The party dispersed without accomplishing the task as they could not find him in the village. He had gone to Kapurthala to attend the wedding of the princess of Kapurthala State. Babu Santa Singh left for Pragpur. Suddenly he saw Zaildar coming from Chaheru, near Madhopur village. He fired four shots at him. Only one hit him, while three missed the aim. Though about 15 persons were working around yet none came to his rescue.<sup>50</sup> His grandson, Lachhu<sup>51</sup> who accompanied him, was left unharmed by Santa Singh, in consonance with the Jassowal resolutions. This was the first exploit of the Babbars in the chain of murderous assaults. It left the government machinery numb and dumb. Since then, the Babbar Akalis followed the arduous path consistently. Now the open encounters with the police and murderous attacks on the toadies seemed inevitable. The Babbars had opened their account of decoities with Jadla affair and that of murders with the elimination of Zaildar Bishan Singh of Ranithua. Both the actions had the blessings and involvement of Karam Singh Daulatpur who remained steadfast, constant and consistent all through and fell on the battle field at Babeli according to the Babbar principles and Sikh tradition.

On 13th February, 1923<sup>52</sup> a toady of Hayatpur, named, Diwan was murdered. He used to help Sardha Ram of Samundra by supplying information about the Akalis. Sardha Ram's name

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50. Ibid., p.24.

51. Paper Book Babbar conspiracy case, p.393. Lachhu also confirms that only one Akali shot, his grandfather, dead.

52. Makhsispuri, Sundar Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.139.

appeared at number 109, in the Babbar hit-list. The work was mainly accomplished by Bhai Udey Singh, Surjan Singh, Dharam Singh and Assa Singh.<sup>53</sup> Karam Singh 'editor' and Ram Singh, P.W. 13 had gone to Nahan to purchase arms with Rs. 180/- advanced by Partaba, brother of Assa Singh against the ornaments looted from Jadla.<sup>54</sup> It was Udey Singh who said final prayers and shot Diwan dead. He was, then, buried in the Haveli of Surjan Singh. From there, they left for Ramgarh Jhuggian and then proceeded to Jassowal. The adeptness and secrecy with which this murder was committed was commendable. For about 6 months the murder remained shrouded in mystery. Neither could the police get any clue nor did the dependents of the deceased suspect any foul play. It was on August 1, 1923 when Assa Singh turned approver, and disclosed the facts relating to this murder and the disposal of dead body by Sunder Singh, Surjan Singh and Dharam Singh. He took Mir Fazal Imam and the investigating party to Hayatpur, where the body was exhumed on the 3rd of August, 1923.<sup>55</sup>

The Babbar influence went on increasing. Their patriotic zeal was catching; it converted some of the dacoits and thus dross was changed into gold. It was on February 16, 1923 when Jathedar Kishan Singh and Babu Santa Singh prevailed upon Waryam Singh Dhugga, Banta Singh and Dalip Singh Dhamian, Dhanna Singh Kotali Bawa Dass and Duman Singh Pandori Mahtaman to come into the Babbar fold. They were advised to observe the following code:

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53. Home Political Department, K.W.2 File No.245/1926, p.75.

54. Loc.cit.

55. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1922, p.56.

1. Recitation of Five Banis was obligatory and it was to form a part of their morning regimen. 2. No action was to be committed for personal spite. 3. No woman was to be maltreated or molested. 4. The dictates of the Jatha were to be followed in letter and spirit.<sup>56</sup>

After the murder of Zaildar Bishan Singh, the police unleashed a wave of repression. Indiscriminate arrests of the Akalis and the resultant atrocities perpetrated on them compelled the Babbars to evolve a plan to save the common villagers from police brutality. On February 22, 1923 a meeting was held in the Haveli of S. Hardit Singh of Jassewal which was attended by Jathedar Kishan Singh, Babu Santa Singh, Dhanna Singh of Bahbalpur, Udey Singh, Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Harbakhash Singh and Hardit Singh of Jassewal. It was considered that two or three Babbars should own Zaildar Bishan Singh's murder and henceforth all murders should be owned by them to save the innocent people from police harassment and torture. No decision could be arrived at as S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur was not present in the meeting.<sup>57</sup>

When they were thus planning their future programme and evolving a strategy to outwit the government machinery and administer a crushing blow to the toadies, the movement received the severest set-back. The spirit behind the

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56. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.111-12.

57. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.113-114. Also see Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarh(Mss), Ch.26. He adds that Jathedar Kishan Singh rejected the proposal of Babu Santa Singh to give share of the booty to the members with a view to attract more people into the Babbar fold.

movement, Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, was arrested on 26th February, 1923 through the connivance of his chief confident Kabul Singh of Birring. Kabul Singh had an intimate connection with Hakim Qumur-ud-din Maulvi who formerly used to live in Birring. He was a C.I.D. functionary and he, through Kabul Singh and his father-in-law, Labh Singh of Dhada Fateh Singh, laid a trap for Kishan Singh. As the Babbars needed money desperately to purchase weapons, it was given out that the Maulvi could turn common metal into gold. This Maulvi had now shifted to Pindori Mahal and resided in an isolated building, commonly known as Masit (Mosque) Khaki Shah,<sup>58</sup> between villages of Pindori Mahal and Dhadda Fateh Singh. Kishan Singh went there on February 25, 1923. He was accompanied by Buta Singh. Buta Singh alluded to the fact that Kishan Singh too doubted faqir's capability to turn ordinary metal into gold.<sup>59</sup> Buta Singh too expressed doubts over the efficacy of faqir's claim. Buta Singh was then sent with a letter to Ram Singh of Dharowal at Amritsar and was asked to contact Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur on the way who might have reached Pindori Nijjaran. Kishan Singh taking a hint from Buta Singh desired to go to Saidpur but Kabul Singh prevailed upon him to stay.<sup>60</sup> At night, Kabul Singh and

58. Vide interview of the writer with S. Buta Singh at 28-Vasant Vihar, Jullundur on 20th November, 1982.

59. Satya, M. Rai, Panjabī Heroic Tradition, p.80 is not correct in stating that Kabul Singh took Kishan Singh, who was not keeping well, to his house, on the pretext of looking after him. The account narrated by Buta Singh is quite different and seems to be correct and has been corroborated by many other sources.

60. Vide interview of the writer with S. Buta Singh, 20th November 1982 at 28-Vasant Vihar, Jullundur City.

Kishan Singh took meals which were sent by Labh Singh Dhadha. In the meantime Labh Singh and Maulvi Qumar-ud-din arranged the police raid. Mr. H. Mathews Superintendent police, Jullundur surrounded the place at 4 a.m. on 26th February, 1923. As soon as it was dawn, he sent for the village carpenter and asked him to make a hole large enough in the door so as to admit of Kishan Singh's hands through the hole. When he did so, Kishan Singh was handcuffed at once. Kabul Singh was also arrested but police had no fears as regards Kabul Singh.<sup>61</sup>

The Babbars were outraged at the treachery and they carried on their campaign of murders and dacoities more virulently. The arrest of Kishan Singh Gargaj did not work as a damper to their activities. Their activities continued unabated.

They first attempted to assassinate Zaildar Ram Narain Singh of Mahalpur. The plan was chalked out by Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Battan Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Babu Santa Singh and Banta Singh of Dhamian in the attic of Kartar Singh Burro Barrian at the latter's suggestion, on 28th February, 1923. Their attempt did not materialise, but when Zaildar came to know that the Babbars were after him, he died out of fear.<sup>62</sup>

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61. Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.682 (Statement of Mr. H. Mathews, Superintendent of Police, Jullundur.

62. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.121 also vide paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy, p.89.



Such was the Babbar terror!

On 3rd March, 1923 Babu Santa Singh, Banta Singh of Dhamian, Sadhu Singh and Banta Singh of Pragpur attacked Jamber railway station.<sup>63</sup> This affair was of little material consequence. The house of station master Chanan Ram was looted but the ornaments they could lay their hands were of little value. Only two or three ornaments of silver were found from Jamadar Sampuran Singh's house. Then they brought station master to the Station and got opened the cash box. They could get Rs. 30/- only from there. The callous and cruel treatment of the Station Master with the passengers had invited the ire of the Babbars. The station master was told that he should not charge money from any person travelling without ticket. He was also advised to relinquish the government service at the earliest otherwise he would be murdered one day.<sup>64</sup>

The next target of the Babbar vengeance was Buta Lambardar of Mangal Shanwan. He had exceeded all the limits of endurance and defied the warnings of the Babbar Akalis. He was taken to task on account of the assistance he gave to the police in harassing the Akalis.<sup>65</sup> His name appeared at serial

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63. Home-Political file 134/II, p.75. The viceroy of India Lord Reading writes to the Secretary of State that the incident took place on 4.3.22. The incident took place on 3 March, but F.I.R. seems to have been lodged on 4th March, 1923.

64. Home Political Deptt., K.W. 2 File No.245/1926, p.79.

65. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.632. (Statement of H. Mathews, A.S.P. Jullundur from 12.10.22 to 14.4.23 P.W.366).

number 13 in the Babbar hit-list. He was attacked on March 10, 1923.<sup>66</sup> by 12 persons led by Babu Santa Singh.<sup>67</sup> Buta went to the roof of his house and shouted for help. The Babbars followed him to the roof. A scuffle ensued and Dhanna Singh fired two shots. Buta fell dead in the court-yard of his neighbour, Dina. None had the courage to come to his help. The Babbars made away with 2 gold and 2 silver ornaments found from his house. Dhanna Singh Kotli Bawa Dass murdered Surjan, Buta's grandson. Santa Singh admonished him for this, as it was tantamount to a violation of the Babbar dictates. The assassination of Buta was an open affair. He too had been apprehending the impending danger to his life as date of his reformation was announced before hand. A police party was posted on patrolling duty due to the influence of his son who was an army officer and was posted at Jullundur. The Babbars shut all the inhabitants of the village in their houses, said their final prayer in the village Gurdwara and attacked Buta at a time when the whole village was awake. None dared come to help him. Even the police party on duty failed to

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66. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.144 is not correct in stating that the attack took place on 11th March, 1923, vide Home Pol.Deptt. K.W.2 file 2945/1926, p.32, wherein it has been stated that the first information report was lodged at the Sadar Thana at Jullundur by Bhola Chaukidar, at 1 a.m. on the 11th March, 1923. The attack took place on the night of 10th March, 1923.

67. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.144-45. The group consisted of Babu Santa Singh, Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Banta Singh, Piara Singh and Dalip Singh of Dhamian, Harbakhsh Singh, Jassowal, Ratnan Singh, Singriwal, Sadha Singh and Buta of Singh Pindori Nijjaran, Sadhu Singh Pragpur and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass.

arrive there in time.<sup>68</sup>

The next victim of the Babbar fury was Labh Singh of Garh Shankar, an ex-mistri of Police Training School, Phillaur. He was suspected for his complicity in the arrest of Jathedar Kishan Singh as he was enlisted in the special police which was set up exclusively to watch and curb the Babbar activities. He was killed on 19th March, 1923 at the time of Dansiwal Chhinj by Babu Santa Singh, Dhanna Singh, Dalipa Dhamian and Battan Singh of Pindori Nijjaran. After the fair, he left towards Behra Kukran, accompanied by a lad. When he reached near a grove of mangoes at a distance of 300 yards from the Chhinj site, Dhanna Singh shot him dead. Then Battan Singh also struck a blow on the stomach with his Kirpan.<sup>69</sup> After the murder they ran in an easterly direction and reached Jassowal.

It was strange that the Babbars could not reform the traitors who had caused the arrest of Master Mota Singh earlier and Kishan Singh of late. They made three attempts to kill Labh Singh of Dhadda Fateh Singh and Kabal Singh Birring whose names appeared in the Babbar list at serial No.26 and 27 respectively. Labh Singh had actually received a reward of

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68. The Akali Patrika, Jullundur, August 29, 1931 (vide an article by Gurbachan Singh on the authority of an eye-witness account of S. Gurdial Singh Phul).

69. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.85.

Rs. 750 for the part he had played in the arrest of Kishan Singh.<sup>70</sup> The three attempts were made on March 14, 17 and 23, 1923. The first attempt was made by 7 Babbars but was abandoned for want of correct timely information about Labh Singh's whereabouts.<sup>71</sup> The second attempt failed as Surain Singh Bistrampur, an unwilling accomplice took to hiding.<sup>72</sup> The third attempt was abandoned as the party contained urchins like Milkha Singh to carry out this operation as that was likely to land them in a terribly difficult situation.<sup>73</sup>

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70. Ibid., p.83.

71. Babu Santa Singh, Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Dalip Singh Dhamian, Shiv Singh Haripur, Kartar Singh, Sadha Singh and Battan Singh Pindori Nijjaran discussed the first attack at a brick kiln of Sham Chaurasi vide Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.149.

72. Paper Book. Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.83, Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Babu Santa Singh, Waryam Singh Dhugga, Banta Singh of Bopa Rai, Shiv Singh of Haripur, Amar Singh of Rajonal, Ujjagar Singh of Bistrampur, Sadha Singh, Sadhu Singh, Duman Singh, Bela Singh of Bopa Rai, Banta Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian, Battan Singh of Pindori Nijjaran. Sixteenth was Surain Singh of Bistrampur who told that Ujjagar Singh had deceived him and was afraid to participate in the contemplated murder. This detail has a minor deviation. Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar op.cit., p.149 mentions Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass instead of Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur.

73. The Arsi, March 1982, p.44. It consisted of S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Bhai Udey Singh, S. Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur, Dalipa of Dhamian, Babu Santa Singh, Bakhshish Singh, Sadha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Sadhu Singh (these three were minors), Udham Singh and Battan Singh of Pindori Nijjaran. Jatehdar Karam Singh reprimanded Battan Singh for having brought urchins like Milkha Singh and venture had to be abandoned.

### Historic Decision of the Babbars:

It was on March 22, 1923 that the Babbars met in a conclave at the hermitage of Sant Thakur Singh Rajowal to own the responsibility of the murders committed by them as the police was perpetrating untold atrocities on villagers to conceal its failure to trace real culprits. In the conclave Karam Singh Daulatpur, Udey Singh and Dhanna Singh Bahbalpur offered to own responsibility for these murders. It was also decided that no Babbar would offer himself for arrest alive. Consequently, the first Babbar Declaration was prepared and an open letter was sent to Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab. It made manifest that the Babbars had taken recourse to sword and left the path of non-violence due to the suppressive and coercive policy of the Panjab Government. It stated that Bishan Singh Zaildar of Rani Thua, Buta Lambardar, his grandson Surjan and Mistri Labh Singh of Garhshankar had been murdered. It was further mentioned that another person was undergoing imprisonment for life in the Babbar Akali jail and that having no penal code of their own, the Babbar Akalis had devised three forms of punishment, namely: (1) Death, (2) Mutilation, (3) Fine.<sup>74</sup> The letter was signed by S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, S. Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur and Bhai Udey Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian and its copies were sent to the Deputy Commissioner, Jullundur, Diwan Durga Dass and Mian Sahib, Minister of Kapurthala

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<sup>74</sup>. Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, Judgement 1925, pp.4-7.



State. Its copies were also pasted in Pindori Nijjaran and were sent to many other villages.<sup>75</sup> The police raid on Pindori Nijjaran on 23rd March, 1923 was conducted on the information of Bhagwan Singh and Harnam Singh, Lambardars and Maulu and Jiwan, Chaukidars. The village was a stronghold of the Babbars. At least 13 persons of this village joined the Babbar Akalis. The Babbars had issued warning to the Jholichuk Lambardas and Chaukidars. In September, 1922, too Udham Singh had written notices with his own hand and pasted them on the village walls with the help of Tufail Mohammed.

The notice read:-

"Badzat Jiwan, Badzat Maula ko  
Farmaya Jata hai, Apni Shararton se bag  
a javen, warna Nak Kan Kat Javenge."<sup>76</sup>

They did not mend their ways. The raid on 23rd March, 1923 aroused the ire of Babu Santa Singh and he decided to do away with the toadies of this village. The first meeting in this connection was convened on April 3, 1923. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur, Uday Singh of Ramgarh, Babu Santa Singh, Sadha Singh, Bakhsish Singh, Kartar Singh and Udham Singh Pindori Nijjaran took part in it. But the decision to murder Jholichuks was deferred. Again on April 20, 1923

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75. Home-Political, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 55.

76. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p. 15  
Also vide Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy (Statement  
of Tufail Mohammed, P.W. 14, p. 117).

Karam Singh Daulatpur, Udey Singh of Rangarh Jhuggian, Dhanna Singh Behbalpur, Bishan Singh and Bhan Singh of Mangat, Amar Singh and Anup Singh of Manko, Chanchal Singh of Sangatpur, Dharam Singh and Mula Singh of Plahi, Dalip Singh of Manak, Surjan Singh and Chanda Singh of Domeli, Kartar Singh, Udham Singh, Sadhu Singh, Mehnga Singh and Bakhsish Singh of Pindori Nijjaran met for the second time. Due to the arrival of the police the programme was once again put off.<sup>77</sup> Thus the toadies there were fortunate to escape the Babbar fury.

Another person on the hit-list of the Babbars was Hazara Singh of Behbalpur. He was shot dead in the early hours of 27th March, 1923 in front of his house. He was killed by S. Dhanna Singh, Karam Singh of Daulatpur and Udey Singh and the fact was announced in the Babbar Akali Doaba of April 14, 1923 that toady Hazara Singh at blacklist No.136 had been given three squares of land.<sup>78</sup>

On 17th April, an ex-Subedar, Genda Singh was assassinated in front of his house in Jullundur District.<sup>79</sup> The plan to

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77. Makhsus Pari, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.160. But Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS) Ch.29 refutes the story of the police arrival. Instead he claims that the Babbars put off their decision in view of the harvesting season as their action might have caused unnecessary trouble to the farmers.

78. Home-Political, File No. K.W.245/1926, p.92.

79. Ibid, File No. 134/II/1923, p.76.

murder him was finalised in the Kutiya of Sant Thakur Singh at Rajowal.<sup>80</sup> Babu Santa Singh, Anup Singh, Karam Singh of Manko, Nand Singh of Ghurial and Battan Singh of Pindori Nijjara attacked him. While Subedar and Nand Singh were grappling, Battan Singh placed his pistol against Subedar's stomach and fired, Anup Singh too fired a shot in the air and then struck the Subedar on the head with the butt of the gun. Karam Singh of Haripur struck him with the sword. Battan Singh missed his mark four times, so Santa Singh took aim and shot him dead.

Though the year 1923 did not augur well for the Babbars yet it was even worse for the toadies. The arrests of L. Karam Singh of Jhingar, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal on January 5, 1923, Kishan Singh on February 26, 1923, Assa Singh on March 1, 1923 and that of Amar Singh of Kot Fatuhi on March 26, 1923 were no doubt crushing blows to the Babbar Movement, but the relentlessness with which they carried on the campaign of elimination of bureaucratic props, threw cold water on police enthusiasm. It was after the murder of Buta of Nangal Shamman that it intensified its operation against the Babbars. On 18th April, 1923 the Deputy Commissioner of Jullundur District, along with Superintendent of Police and Inspector Police Station, Adampur reached Ghurial. Again on April 21, Abdul Aziz Supdt. C.I.D. and Deputy Commissioner, Jullundur reached there with military, pressurised people and

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80. Home-Political, File No.K.W. 245/1926 p.95.

raided Ghurial, Manko and Chukhiana. The Akalis of Ghurial informed the S.G.P.C. about the police barbarities.<sup>81</sup> The repression of the police touched new heights. Though the Babbars gave shocks to the police and the toadies by swooping down upon them many times till December 1923, yet they were by and large on the defensive in their encounters and confrontations. It was now the turn of the police and the bureaucracy to stifle and suppress the movement with an iron-hand. It exerted pressure on the villages not to give the Babbars "any quarter, nor help them in any form or manner."<sup>82</sup> The police fanned out in the villages and began to haunt and hound them.

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81. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., pp.34-35.

82. Gulab Singh, Under the Shadow of Gallows, Delhi, 1963, p.36.

## VII

THE BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT

The Babbar Akalis considered the British Government a vicious institution which was founded on force and fraud. The Babbars had raised patriotism to the pitch of religion. The atrocities during the Gurdwara Reform movement had inflamed them and they openly worked for the destruction of the system which was responsible for their sad plight. The government in its anxiety to curb dissentient voices recruited spies and stooges. These people created panic and scare in the villages. The Babbar Akalis gave priority to their 'reform'. They despatched many a traitor and were quite a force to reckon with. Their activities were at their height in 1923 and so was also the repression by the government. The successive murders of Jholihuks in the districts of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur, nearly, panicked the local officers.

The Deputy Commissioner of Jullundur, Mr. W.C. Jacob who was greatly perturbed at the murder of Subedar Genda Singh of Ghurial recommended, to the Panjab Government, the adoption of stringent measures of the nature of martial law. On his suggestion, Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Aziz was deputed to deal with the situation. At that time, the people were



too terrified to come forward and help the authorities to bring the offenders to book. As a result a conference, of the local officers, was convened at Lahore and it was decided to post additional police and military in Jullundur and Hoshiarpur Districts to patrol about the countryside and re-establish confidence in the minds of the people.<sup>1</sup>

A wave of repression was unleashed which led to the persecution of the innocent Akalis. Their houses were searched and plundered. The honour of the women folk was violated and many Akalis were thrown into jails for no fault of theirs.<sup>2</sup>

The police raids on different villages were conducted on March 23, 1923, immediately after the duplication of an open Babbar letter to the Governor of the Panjab, Sir Edward MacLagan, on 22nd March, 1923. Mr. H. Mathews, S.P. Jullundur stated that they raided the houses of Buta Singh, Hukan Singh, Kartar Singh, Nirvair Singh, Sadha Singh and Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran<sup>3</sup> and obtained some useful information. At the time of search, the Lambardars and Chaukidars of Pindori Nijjaran, who were suspected to be the police informers, were so terror-stricken of the wrath of the Babbar Akalis that the police had to be

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1. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p. 766.

2. Tarlok Singh, Shiromani Khalsa Tawarikh, Amritsar, 1962, pp. 111-1

3. Pindori Nijjaran, a village at a distance of 20 miles from Jullundur towards the north-east, was a big centre of the Babbar activities. There were 13 Babbar Akalis of this village, out of whom two turned approvers in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. The Babbar Akali Doaba leaflet was also duplicated here in the house of Kartar Singh. Bhai Buta Singh was a close companion of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj. His memoirs, Babbar Akali Tehrik (MES), throw limelight on many facts of the Babbar Saga which were little known so far.

sent to protect their lives under the orders of Khan Sahib Mir Fasal Imam, D.S.P. (C.I.D.) Panjab at Lahore.<sup>4</sup>

The police also raided other hide-outs of the Babbars such as Kishan Pura,<sup>5</sup> Jassoval,<sup>6</sup> Bika<sup>7</sup>, Pragpur,<sup>8</sup> Rehsival,<sup>9</sup> Rajowal,<sup>10</sup> Kot Fatuhi<sup>11</sup> and Daulatpur.<sup>12</sup> These raids gave the police many vital and important clues.<sup>13</sup>

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4. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.692.
  5. Kishan Pura was an important centre of the Babbars. It was called 'big hospital' in the Babbar colloquy.
  6. Jassoval remained a hub of the Babbar activities for three consecutive years. The important workers of the Babbar Jatha from this village were S. Hardit Singh, Charan Singh nee Faqir Singh, Teja Singh, Zaila Singh, Harbakhsh Singh, Hari Singh, Gurbakhsh Singh and Labh Singh. The crucial meetings of December 25 and 30-31, 1922 were held here in the Haveli of Hardit Singh and in the Kutiya of Charan Singh, respectively.
  7. Bika. This village produced Atma Singh. He was a messenger of the Babbar Akali Jatha.
  8. Pragpur. Pragpur was the main centre of the activities of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj. Sant Kartar Singh lived here, in a Kutiya. He gave help in the nascent stage of the movement but turned approver and thus proved a traitor to the Babbar cause in the end.
  9. Rehsival: The village has significant place in the history of the Babbar Akalis because it was here that the talks of the merger of the Chakarvarti Jathas took place.
  10. Rajowal: The Babbar Akali Doaba was duplicated here in the Kutiya of Sant Thakar Singh. The important decision of reforming the toadies on 24th March, 1922; formation of the Babbar Jatha in August 1922 and the decision of owning the responsibility of the Doaba murders was taken here on March 22, 1923 in an open letter to the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjab.
  11. Kot Fatuhi: Here big conferences were held since the Nankana holocaust. The conferences were arranged in March 1921, December 1921 and February 1922. S. Lakha Singh, Hardit Singh, Waryam Singh, Sunder Singh, Bhulla Singh and Amar Singh granthi of Kotbare Khan took active part in the Babbar activities. The Babbar Akali Doaba was also duplicated here.
  12. Daulatpur: S. Karam Singh 'Editor' hailed from this village. He was killed at Babeli on September 1, 1923. A punitive police post was also set up here and a punitive post tax of Rs. 2100/- was realised from the villagers, vide, The Pardesi Khalsa, May 19, 1923.
  13. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.842.

Khan Bahadur Abdul Azis took charge of the Babbar case on April 19, 1923 and on the basis of the March raids, the Babbar hide-outs were once again raided from April 20 to 22, 1923 in a surprise move. From Pindori Nijjaran, Kartar Singh Hukam Singh, Milkha Singh, Sadha Singh and Nirvair Singh were arrested on April 21, though records showed that these arrests were made on April 22, 1923.<sup>14</sup> Others arrested during this operation were Hari Singh and Labh Singh of Jassowal, Bela Singh and Sadhu Singh of Pragpur, Ujjagar Singh of Bistrampur, Sunder Singh of Kot Fatahi, Gurbachan Singh of Sadhara, Sant Mit Singh of Kishanpura and Nand Singh of Ghurial.<sup>15</sup> According to the 'Akali-Te-Pardesi', 29 Akalis were arrested on April 24, 1923 on the suspicion<sup>of</sup>/being involved in the Doaba murders. The arrested persons included Slakha Singh, Bawa Singh, Waryam Singh, Sunder Singh and Bhulla Singh of Kot Fatahi, Hari Singh of Chela, Hazara Singh of Gondpur and Kartar Singh of Mannanhana. Subedar Khem Singh of Sirhala, Labh Singh, Mula Singh, Karam Singh, Hari Singh and Husnak Singh of Jassowal, Gurbachan Singh and Nihal Singh of Sadhara were some of the prominent persons among the arrested suspects. Others included Narain Singh of Mazara, Bhagwan Singh of Bherowal, Hazara Singh of Helran, Harnam Singh and Dula Singh of Bankpur, Kishan Singh of Kukar Mazara, Ram Singh of Maujo Mazara, Bishan Singh of Bahalpur, Hakam Singh of Simbli and Phuman Singh,

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14. The Argi, Delhi, March, 1932, p.42.

15. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.201.

Milkha Singh and Uttam Singh of Moranwali.<sup>16</sup>

The Panjab Government was very sanguine in arresting the Babbar Akalis. Consequently, another proclamation was issued under the signatures of Mr. H.K.Kaul, Commissioner, Jullundur Division announcing that 6 squares of land would be given to the person/persons for helping the arrest of all those members of the Babbar Jatha alleged to be involved in the murders of Bishan Singh of Rani Thua, Buta Singh of Nangal Shamman, Labh Singh Mistri of Garhsbankar, Hazara Singh of Behbalpur and Genda Singh pensioner of Ghurial.<sup>17</sup> After this proclamation, the police were able to arrest Waryam Singh of Kot Fatuhi, Shiv Singh of Haripur and Amar Singh of Pindori Nijjaran on April 27, Dalip Singh of Dhamian on April 28, Piara Singh of Dhamian on May 1, Sant Thakar Singh of Rajoval and Banta Singh of Pragpur on May 5, 1923. Atma Singh of Bika, Thakar Singh and Harnam Singh of Pindori Nijjaran were arrested on May 6, while Prem Singh of Pragpur was arrested on May 12, 1923. Karam Singh of Manko was also nabbed on May 12, at Jullundur Railway Station on his way to Amritsar. His arrest was effected through the help of Jagat Singh of Manko who

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16. The Akali Te Pardesi, April 29, 1923. The paper included Gurbachan Singh Badhara also among the arrested persons but Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.36. writes that he was arrested on 22nd April, 1923. Also see Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.201, Also vide Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.954.

17. Makhsupuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.202.

who served as the informer. On 15th May, 1923 twenty one persons were arrested. They included Kartar Singh, Hazara Singh, Atma Singh and Bir Singh from Gondpur, Kartar Singh, Sohan Singh, Puran Singh, Harnam Singh and Inder Singh of Chahalpur, and Pritam Singh of Moila. Others arrested included Mehar Singh, Chint Singh, Mohan Singh and Bhaunda Singh of Moranwali, Dasaundha Singh of Banga, Lachhman Singh of Phakrudi, Jawala Singh of Malgarh, Aggar Singh of Tannauli, Ram Singh of Pindori Phagorian and Udham Singh of Kala Behr and Hazara Singh of Munder.<sup>18</sup>

On 16th May, about 113 persons were rounded up and put in prison. Many of them were let off as they were found innocent.<sup>19</sup> The 16 persons arrested from Daulatpur included Phuman Singh, Waryam Singh, Banta Singh, Bela Singh, Sarmukh Singh, Dalip Singh, Niranjan Singh and Wazir Singh. Ujjagar Singh, Hukam Singh, Hari Singh, Hazara Singh and Nagina Singh of Hayatpur, Bishan Singh of Pindori Ladha Singh, Isher Singh, Karam Singh and Sham Singh of Behbalpur, Dalel Singh of Mannanbana, Arjan Singh of Naqadipur and Tej Singh of Paldi were also arrested.<sup>20</sup>

Jagjit Singh of Kuthar was arrested on May 27, 1923.<sup>21</sup>

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18. The Akali Te Pardesi, May 21, 1923.

19. Ibid., May 28, 1923.

20. The Pardesi Khalsa, May 23, 1923.

21. Makhsusuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.203.



Despite these arrests, the Babbars were still a terror for the toadies. It was admitted that a number of village officials and other loyalists were fear-stricken and expressed anxiousness to resign their posts.<sup>22</sup> Mr. C.A.H. Townsend, Commissioner, Jullundur Division also <sup>admitted</sup> and acknowledged the force of the Babbars in his evidence wherein he stated that "Many of the village officials spoke to me in a whisper and this too in my own house ... on account of this terrorism we could get hardly any evidence to show who was responsible for these outrages."<sup>23</sup>

Keeping in view the gravity of the situation, the government sanctioned the use of troops. In the beginning of June 1923, two hundred cavalry and 250 infantry were placed at the disposal of the Commissioner, Jullundur Division.<sup>24</sup> The appointment of Khan Sahib Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Superintendent Police, C.I.D. proved as a break-through in solving the mystery of the murders and dacoities of the region. He was ably assisted by Diwan Khan Bahadur Abdul Hamid of Kapurthala. The officials were able to round up 71 Babbars on April 22, 1923, and apprehended other 21 members of the Jatha,<sup>25</sup> after conducting raids on 39 villages.<sup>26</sup> A number of punitive posts were also set up in

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22. Home Political, File No. 134/11/1923, p. 76.

23. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p. 809.

24. Loc. cit.

25. The Tribune. November 1, 1923 (evidence of P.C. Isenonger D.I.G., Police (CID) in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, 1923-25.

26. Home Political Proceedings, File No. 200/1926, p. 3.

different villages such as Ghurial, Khuradpur and Kandhola. The whole amount imposed as Punitive Post Tax was recovered from Ghurial,<sup>27</sup> whereas Rs. 1336 were recovered from Khuradpur and Kandhola each. The punitive posts were also set-up in Daulatpur, Aur, Mahal Gehla, Jhingar, and Bunga. The highest amount of the Punitive Post Tax imposed was Rs. 5650 on Bunga. Mahal Gehla came second with Rs. 4695, followed by Aur with Rs. 3700/-. The tax realised from Daulatpur and Jhingar was Rs. 2100/- and 1500/- respectively.<sup>28</sup>

The Punitive Post Tax of Rs. 8000/- was also realised from Tannauli, Dhakoval, Harkhowal, Pindori Bibi and Mascanian on June 1, 1923. On June 2, 1923, the Punitive Police Posts were also set up in Kandhali, Bahli and Kalra as well.<sup>29</sup> Lord Reading, Viceroy of India, in his report to the Secretary of State informed that 186 persons were arrested, 25 of whom were suspected of actual participation in murders; and against 30 others there was evidence of abetment and murder.<sup>30</sup>

The reaction of the press was somewhat mixed. Some of the newspapers owned by the Sikhs reacted sharply. The Panjab Darpan criticised the Panjab Government for arresting hundreds of the Akalis on the pretext of the alleged help to

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27. The Akali-Te-Pardesi, May 21, 1923.

28. The Pardesi Khalsa, May 19, 1923.

29. The Akali Te Pardesi, May 28, 1921.

30. Home-Political, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 76.

a group of 5 or 6 Babbars. The paper made special mention of 11 arrests made at Ghural as three out of eleven were those who suffered imprisonment in the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha.<sup>31</sup>

Though the same paper in its editorial of May 18, expressed the view that none of the bodies like the SGPC, Sikh League and Chief Khalsa Diwan had any sympathy with the Babbars as they were opposed to their policy of violence, yet it resented indiscriminate arrests and expressed its fear that the statement of Amar Singh approver might lead to more detentions and arrests and admitted that the time was of grave peril for the Sikhs of the Doaba. It urged the SGPC to institute a sub-committee to investigate these arrests as well as the Doaba murders.<sup>32</sup> The 'Gurdwara', in its issue of May 2, 1923, condemned the whole-sale arrests. It took exception to the punitive and itinerary police stationed in the villages and observed that murderers must be a few in number but the government was bent upon harrassing and bringing to knee the whole of the Doaba.<sup>33</sup> The 'Khalsa' also stated that with the persecution of the innocent people, the public in general would get disgusted with the bureaucracy and refrain from rendering a helping hand to it.<sup>34</sup> The 'Akali Te Pardesi' in its issue

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31. The Punjab Darpan, May 11, 1923.

32. The Punjab Darpan, May 18, 1923.

33. The Punjab Press Abstract, Vol. XXXV p.249, dated May 12, 1923.

34. Loc.cit.

of May 14, 1923, remarked: "Peaceful people are now between the devil and the deep sea. If they oppose the Babbar Akalis, their lives are in danger, but if they even talk with the latter, the bureaucracy comes down heavily upon them."<sup>35</sup>

The powerful wave of rigour and repression was now passing over the Doaba to crush the Babbar Akalis and it had thrown in shade even the memory of the days of the martial law, thus observed Dr. Satya Pal in the 'Bande Matram' of May 24, 1923.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, the 'Gulzar-i-Hind' in its issue of 28th April, 1923 condemned the government for its complacency. It asserted that it was a wrong principle to be afraid of mischief-mongers and leave the loyalists to their own fate. Those who had fallen a victim to the violence of the Babbar Akalis in the Doaba were well disposed towards the government and the latter should have adopted precautionary measures of deterring nature to protect them.<sup>37</sup> The "Muslim Outlook" in its issue of 5th May called the Doaba murders, the work of a strong and determined secret organization of criminals and concluded that the political motives were also connected with these violent perpetrations.<sup>38</sup> The local Government ironically regarded the movement as a conflict between criminal elements against

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35. The Panjab Press Abstract, XXXVI, May 26, 1923, p.276.

36. The Panjab Press Abstract, Vol. XXXVI, dated June 2, 1923, p.286.

37. The Panjab Press, Abstract, Vol. XXXVI, dated May 12, 1923.

38. Loc.cit.

the forces of law and order.<sup>39</sup>

Though with the confessional statements of Assa Singh, Amar Singh, and Battan Singh, the police succeeded in making a dent in the Babbar citadel, yet it was not an easy task to demolish and root out the movement and haul up the leaders. The Babbars, once again, delivered a sensational shock to the Panjab Government, when on May 20, 1923, they swooped on Chaudhari Falla Ram and his brother Dittu of Kaulgarh.<sup>40</sup> This double murder was committed on the night of May 20-21, by Karam Singh of Daulatpur, Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur, Banta Singh of Dhamian, Bishan Singh of Mangat, Udey Singh, Anup Singh, Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass, Babu Santa Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian.<sup>41</sup>

The 'Babbar Attack' was premeditated. A leaflet in "Gurmukhi" dated 17th May, 1923 was pasted inside Falla's Dalam (entrance hall). The poster contained the names of Karam Singh Jathedar, Bhai Dhanna Singh, Bhai Udey Singh, Babu Santa Singh, Bhai Anup Singh, Bhai Bishan Singh and Bhai Dalip Singh. This showed the reorganisation of the Jatha, with Babbar Karam Singh as president and Babu Santa Singh as its Secretary. They categorically emphasized that the mean <sup>in</sup> tactics used by the bureaucracy/intimidating, arresting and

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39. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 76.

40. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 200, 1926, pp. 7-8.

41. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p. 153, Also see Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss), Ch. 39.



brow-beating their innocent helpers on charges of murder and arresting others for conspiracy had compelled the signatories to join the Jatha.<sup>42</sup> The Babbars now were on war-path. As a result of it, certain traitors took refuge with their relatives and others hid themselves in the police stations, but some loyalists like Ralla and Dittu carried on their nefarious activities without heeding to the threats delivered by the Babbar Akalis. They had also caused the arrest of Dalip Singh and Gurbachan Singh of Sadhara.<sup>43</sup> Later on, they spied on Bawa Singh and Udham Singh of Kaulgarh. They did not desist even after Karam Singh of Daulatpur, who happened to be their relative,<sup>44</sup> requested them to stop their activities.<sup>44</sup>

These murders had created panic in the villages. Even Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Superintendent of Police, on special duty, had to admit this. He wrote "Dittu and Ralla begged them to spare their lives offering them to pay later on any sum they further wanted; butcher culprits replied that they were jholichuks and would not be spared on any account. This was followed by several shots and the culprits decamped after killing both the brothers taking the eastern side, they had originally come from. The most surprising fact in the outrage is that while the culprits stayed for about 1½ hour in the

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42. Home-Political, Proceedings, File No.134/II/1923,p.7.

43. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.36.

44. Makhsusuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.162.

early part of the night when the whole village comprising of about 100 houses was awake, not a single man came to the rescue of the victims, the neighbours shutting themselves in the houses."<sup>45</sup>

The perpetrators of the outrage were the same people who were responsible for several crimes. They had taken refuge in the Siwalak Hills. Kaulgarh, the scene of the outrage is only five miles on the side of the Siwalik Hills. They came in and went back from the village towards the same direction.<sup>46</sup> Though the Babbar strength was depleted by numerous arrests, yet the Babbars who were still active showed their unflinching determination to deal with the spies and informers.

It was in Kaulgarh on 20th May, 1923 that Karam Singh asked the Babbars to give their names for the second time to take the responsibility of the murders, in case, Dhanna Singh, Uday Singh and he were either killed or arrested. Babu Santa Singh, Dalipa of Dhamian, Anup Singh of Manko and Bishan Singh of Mangat offered themselves respectively but Banta Singh of Dhamian and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass declined. On 21st May, it was at Kaulgarh that the seven Babbars duplicated their Second Declaration and the same was published

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45. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.134/II/1923, p.7.

46. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.134/II/1923, p.8.

in the Babbar Akali Doaba. In this declaration the contractors were also forbidden to bid for the contracts of opium and wine.<sup>47</sup>

The Babbars also asked the people to use wood and fruit of the trees fearlessly that grew on the road leading from Ropar through Bala-chaur, Garhshankar, Mahalpur, Hoshiarpur and Tanda to Hargobindpur. As a result of this declaration, no contractor came forward to give bid for mango groves for the years 1922 and 1923.<sup>48</sup>

The Babbars made their next move against Subedar Sunder Singh of Randhawa Masandan in which they did not succeed. He opposed the Babbar Akali movement and had his <sup>son</sup> and four others enrolled as special constables. A notice was put in the village threatening him with dire consequences. It was towards the end of May that Kartar Singh (younger) and Kartar Singh (elder) of Domeli, Babu Santa Singh, Banta Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian, Dhanna Singh of Kotli, Bawa Dass, Hazara Singh of Munder and Anup Singh of Manko reached there.<sup>49</sup> But they had to abandon their project when they learnt that the Subedar was armed and was in a position to defend himself.<sup>50</sup>

On the 6th June, 1923, Ata Mohammad Patwari was murdered on the road leading to Nanda Chaur in Hoshiarpur District.<sup>51</sup>

47. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.205.

48. Loc.cit.

49. Ibid., p.164.

50. Home Political, File K.W.2 No.245, 1926, p.106.

51. Babbar Akali conspiracy case, 1923-25, p.7.

He was murdered by Banta Singh, Dalipa of Dhamian and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass.

This once again created panic in the area and the government made frantic efforts to curb the Babbar activities. The government report on the political situation in Panjab for the fortnight ending on 30th June, 1923 made its special mention. It admitted that "the arrival of the troops in the Doaba and the bi-weekly flights of aeroplanes scattering propaganda leaflets have had distinctly a reassuring effect on the loyal population. Offers of assistance are being received freely from private individuals and there is reason to hope that before long more of the outlaws would be captured."<sup>52</sup>

The Babbar Jatha was also declared an unlawful association under Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908 and Enrolment of Special Police Act, 1861.<sup>53</sup> Besides this, the additional police also was sanctioned. In addition to this, various groups of 50 army men were deputed to keep an eye and wide vigil on the disturbed areas. Even Mr. C.A.H. Townsend, Commissioner, Jullundur Division, was advised to take strong force while on tour in Hoshiarpur District in July, 1923.<sup>54</sup> Special C.I.D. was deputed to assist the local police in their efforts to arrest the Babbars. A force of 50 regular

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52. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.39.

53. Ibid., 5. Also, quoted in The Civil and Military Gazette, 9th August, 1923.

54. Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, Judgement, p.129.

police were moved to Jullundur and the enrolment of special force of 150 including 50 mounted men was sanctioned. The police were assisted by a military force of 250 Indian Infantry and a squadron of the armoured cars. All these measures made it very difficult for the Babbars to operate in the area and they had now few offers of free food which they had been hitherto enjoying without asking.<sup>55</sup>

These measures compelled the Babbars to think of and to look for safe hide-outs. In the second week of June, 1923 Babu Santa Singh, Dalipa and Banta Singh of Dhamian, Anup Singh of Manko and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass decided to take refuge in the Malwa. Babu Santa Singh, Dalipa and Anup Singh left for the Malwa and reached Hindiaya and put up in the house of Bir Singh Akali. Sant Kartar Singh advised Anup Singh and Dalipa to spend some days in the Gurdwara of Thikriwala and then at Mastuana. He alongwith Santa Singh left for Maiwala and stayed with Isher Singh. Sant Kartar Singh who turned traitor took away cartridges of Babu Santa Singh and was not even suspected.<sup>56</sup> On the 20th June, 1923 on the basis of information, Mir Fasal Imam arrested Babu Santa Singh at Tapa Railway Station from the 3rd class compartment of a train going to Bhatinda from Patiala.<sup>57</sup>

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55. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.134/II/1923, p.10.

56. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.216.

57. Babbar Akali Case, Judgement, p.8.



Babu Santa Singh had assumed the leadership of the Jatha and was apparently the brain of the movement.<sup>58</sup> He was hauled up and arrested and from his possession were recovered one revolver, eleven copies of the Babbar Akali leaflet of 21st May, 1923 and some papers including a letter addressed to Jawala Singh and Bhagwan Singh of Fatehpur Kothi. It also led to the recovery of the 'Elam' duplicator, on which the leaflets were printed, from the house of Parshotam Singh of Fatehpur Kothi. Bhagwan Singh and Parshotam Singh were also arrested. Santa Singh's detailed confessional statement also led to the arrest of 9 others including Kartar Singh, Bela Singh, Maluk Singh and Bachint Singh, who turned approvers. Kartar Singh furnished certain information which led to the arrest of Dalel Singh Mannanbana and Ram Singh and the disclosure made by the latter led to the arrest of ten other persons including Ram Singh S/O Gurmukh Singh of Hayatpur. This was another serious setback and it further thinned the depleted Babbar ranks.

The Babbars carried on their activities of reforming iholichuks despite this serious setback that they had suffered. It was on the night of 15th July, 1923 that Bishan Singh of Sandhara was attacked by Banta Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian, Waryam Singh of Dhugga and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass. He w

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58. How Political Proceedings, File No.134/II/1923,p.39.

enrolled as a special police constable in June, 1923 and had since been assisting the police in hunting down the remaining absconders of the Babbar Akali Jatha. On the night of 15th July, while Bishan Singh was sleeping in front of his house, he was awakened by severe blow on the chest. He ran for his life, but was chased and seriously wounded. Later on he recovered in the hospital, despite serious wounds.<sup>59</sup> The Babbar terror was evident, here as well. The villagers were aroused but none pursued the Babbars, due to fear.

#### The Babbar Problem and the British Parliament:

The Panjab Government was severely grilled in the press and the Parliament for its failure to apprehend the Babbars. The Babbars' exploits were echoed even in the British Parliament. The numerous murders of the toadies and incessant attacks of the Babbars gave many anxious moments to the ruling party in London. The deteriorating law and order situation was its special topic of discussion. The move of the Governor of the Panjab to disband 606 constables out of 20,000 strong force was hotly discussed in the Parliament. Sir Charles Yates sought its clarification and Earl Winterton replied that Lord Peel had already enquired of the Government of India with regard to the reduction of 3 lakhs in the Panjab Police Budget. Taking into consideration the financial conditions of the province the Governor was justified in taking the decision, but it was a risky decision in view of the prevailing political and

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59. Ibid., pp.86-87.

administrative situation in Panjab.<sup>60</sup> The Panjab Government also came under fire for attaching too little importance to the movement. On 4th June, 1923, Sir Charles Yates expressed indignation "over the programme of murdering all officers and killing every foreigner. He also sought information regarding the revolutionary movement in the Panjab by certain Babbar Akali Sikhs."<sup>61</sup> On 25th June, 1923 Lt. Colonel Howard Bury sought information from the Under-Secretary about the number of political murders committed by the Akalis since January 1, 1923 and enquired whether the increase in murders was due to the hasty reduction in the number of police force.<sup>62</sup> The under-Secretary informed the House of Commons in response to Lt. Colonel Bury's question that ten murders had been committed and added that special police had been enlisted and the military forces were co-operating in the pursuit of the gangs. About 186 persons had been arrested.<sup>63</sup>

In reply to another question by Mr. Hope Simpson, Earl Winterton expressed satisfaction at the steps that were being taken to deal with the situation.<sup>64</sup>

One thing is clear that the Babbar activities had shaken the British administration in the Punjab, and grave doubts were being expressed in London at the ability of the Panjab Government to cope effectively with the alarming situation. Colonel Yates had suggested that the Doaba be

60. The Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, March 22, 1923 (Microfilm-NMML).

61. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 78.

62. Loc.cit.

63. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 134/II/1923, p. 8.

64. Loc.cit.

merged with some native state.

The 'Akali-To-Pardesi' of the 5th July, 1923 remarked that the observation of Colonel Yates was significant and showed that Indian Princes could rule better than the British rulers. It reminded the British that not only the Doaba but the whole of the Panjab of which the Britain took forcible possession belonged to Maharaja Dalip Singh. If it wished to do this only after events like those of the Doaba occurred (every where), may God fulfil its wishes.<sup>65</sup> Bhattan Singh 'Asad' observed that a small action of the Babbar Akalis had shaken London and Colonel Yates was thinking of moving a resolution to handover this area to a native state'. He observed that the real peace could not be established either by repression or by handing out the Doaba to the native princes, who were more despotic than the British rulers. He suggested the creation of a small state to be administered by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee for the restoration of peace.<sup>66</sup>

The British Treasury Benches grew deeply nervous. In letter No.2443 of 30th August, 1923, India office admitted that at the time of Sir Charles Yates' question there was considerable public anxiety in this country about the

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65. The Punjab Press Abstract, Vol.XXXIV, July 14, 1923.

66. The Punjab Darpan, July 13, 1923.

situation in the Panjab, and the under-Secretary of State had some apprehension that an attempt might be made to move an adjournment of the House in order to call attention to the situation in the Panjab and the failure of the authorities to deal with it.<sup>67</sup>

The situation was peculiar in 1923. The Sikhs generally sympathised with the Babbars and the few who did not, were too afraid to help the government officials.<sup>68</sup> The Babbars were a terror for the loyalists. The members of the Panjab Legislative Council like Mian Muhammed Shah Niwaz exhorted the Government to deal with the Babbars firmly and persecute them forthwith. Bhai Jodh Singh also categorically made it clear that the Sikh members had not got any sympathy for those who committed crimes.<sup>69</sup> Only Sardar Tara Singh, M.L.C. criticised the way in which the police administration was being carried on in the Panjab. He said, "The police surround a village, arrest men and release them. For the sake of a few persons, whole villages are besieged at night."<sup>70</sup> Under these circumstances, the government could not be complacent anymore. It took strident action against the Babbars. The

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67. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.90.

68. Home-Political, File No.200/1926, p.15.

69. The Punjab Legislative Council, Debates, January 2 to March 2, 1924, Vol.VI, p.51.

70. Ibid., p.50.



weakling among the Babbars and traitors were promised lucrative rewards. The moderate <sup>members of</sup> SGPC was cajoled to bargain and dissociate themselves from the Babbars and finally deployment of police and army was also made on war-footing. The Babbars were hunted like a game.

#### The Babbar Akalis and the Akali Leadership:

The Akali leadership showed willingness to toe the government line. Even in March, 1923, the Tribune published the speech of Chief Secretary, Panjab, Mr. C.D. Craik in which he appreciated the Akali leaders for their non-violent adherence, which they had instilled in their followers by their example, propaganda and actions.<sup>71</sup> On April 24, 1923, the S.G.P.C. in one of its communiques completely and emphatically dissociated itself from the Babbars, though in the same breath it declared that its heart went out in love and pity to these misguided Sikhs.<sup>72</sup> The editor of the Civil and Military Gazette detected signs of 'Covert sympathy of Akalis' in this communique for the Babbars. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in its Gurmata No.7 made it clear that it considered the policy of murders extremely dangerous for the Panth.<sup>73</sup> Its reply published in the Tribune as a rejoinder to the Civil and Military Gazette pointed

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71. The Panjab Legislative Council, Proceedings, p.1267.

72. The Tribune, September 27, 1923.

73. The Proceedings of S.G.P.C. General Committee (1922-39), Register No.3, Gurmata No.7, p.53.

to the timely stand to which it was veering round. It clarified that the epithet 'Akali' adopted by the Babbars was likely to create a wrong impression among the people hailing from the distant provinces that the Babbars were perhaps a section of the Akalis who had got out of control of the S.G.P.C. and had taken to violent methods, but they were all the same within the Akali organization. It also hoped that every member of the S.G.P.C. would always welcome the opportunity to clear the complete dissociation of his dearly cherished open and non-violent movement from any secret and violent movement.<sup>74</sup> Though the Akalis did not hold forth the Babbars as fine heroes, yet they showed love and pity for the misguided Sikhs because they thought that the Babbars had been driven to a campaign of mad and successful violence by the repressive policy of the Panjab Government.

The Government was trying to widen the cleavage between the Akalis and the Babbar Akalis gradually. It categorically declared on April 23, 1923 that the Babbar Jatha was responsible for the murderous attacks on the Loyalists. Then S.G.P.C. too, declared that it had no link with the Babbars in its declaration of April 24, 1923. The Panjab Government released the 'Guru Ka Bagh morcha' prisoners on April 25, on the one hand and on the other hand it resorted to repression on the Babbar Akalis.

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74. The Tribune, Lahore, September 27, 1923.  
Also vide the Declaration No. 474 of Shiromani Gurdwara  
Parbandhak Committee, dated April 24, 1923.

The Government was anxious to dissociate the Akalis from the Babbar Akalis.<sup>75</sup> The moderate leadership passed another resolution on May 29-30, 1923 and advised Gurdwara Committees and Akali Jathas to dissociate and keep away the Sikhs from those who had taken to violence and forbade to help them.<sup>76</sup> In this resolution the S.G.P.C. pleaded the release of religious prisoners and not those of the political prisoners.

The S.G.P.C. had issued this statement, repudiating the doctrine of violence, on a hint from the government.<sup>77</sup> The government had assured them in the bargain that the Akali prisoners would be released and their other demands would also be accepted.<sup>78</sup>

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee passed a resolution in a general meeting on 29th September 1923 at Akal Takhat and once again reiterated its adherence "to the settled policy of non-violence" and asked the Akalis "to keep up the struggle for God and Guru with vigour and determination by all peaceful and legitimate means till complete religious liberty is attained."<sup>79</sup>

Even Fazal-Inam, Deputy Superintendent of Police, C.I.D., incharge of the trial of the Babbar Akalis, on behalf

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75. Master Tara Singh, Meri Yad, Amritsar, 1945, p.64.

76. Copy of the proceedings of SGPC, Register No. 3, Gurmatta No. 3, p.53, Also vide Akali leaders case (1923-25), p.2025.

77. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.81.

78. Home-Political, File No.130/1930.

79. The Tribune, Lahore, October 3, 1923.

of the police, in the court of Mr.L.A.Bull, Special Magistrate, Lahore, conceded that the S.G.P.C. had neither instigated the Babbar Akali crimes nor had it conspired with the Babbar Akalis.<sup>80</sup> Though the British Government in India, in its anxiety to crush the Akali movement, tried to dub the Akalis responsible for the actions of the Babbar Akalis, yet it did not succeed. The moderates like S.B. Mehtab Singh categorically declared that there was absolutely no connection between the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Babbars.<sup>81</sup>

#### The Babbar Akalis and the Sikh League:

The Panjab Government seems to have influenced the Central Sikh League as well. Master Sunder Singh Lyallpuri who was president-elect of the Special Session of the Sikh league held on 24th June, 1923 expressed the view that the Babbar Akali Jatha of the Doaba, which was taking recourse to violent methods, was greatly mistaken in following the path of violence.

Though this Special Session of the Sikh league condemned the repressive methods resorted to by the bureaucracy under the cover of the Babbar Akalis in the Doaba, yet it also deprecated the violent activities of the Babbar Akalis.<sup>82</sup> The congress leaders too, under the leadership of Gandhiji could not eschew revolutionary methods. The secret murders committed

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80. Vide, Akali Leaders conspiracy case from 8 November, 1923 to June 18, 1926, p.28 (published) and pp.111-114 of manuscript.

81. Ibid., p.747 and pp.2946-47 of the Manuscript.

82. The Khalsa Advocate, June 29, 1923.

by the revolutionaries were dubbed as crimes and were not considered acts of heroism.<sup>83</sup>

**Fresh Move of the Government to Curb the Babbar Akalis:**

Thus the Panjab Government was in a position to isolate the Babbar Akalis and it gave a free hand to it to renew a reign of terror to liquidate the Babbar Akalis. There was some basis, therefore, when Master Mota Singh and the Naujawan Bharat Sabha charged Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee with giving a green signal to the Panjab Government for the execution of the Babbar Akalis.<sup>84</sup> The next step for the Panjab Government was to apprehend the absconding Babbars. On August 8, 1923, it came out with the third proclamation and announced the following rewards for the arrest of the Babbars:

Karam Singh of Daulatpur	Rs. 3000/-
Udey Singh and Dhanna Singh	Rs. 2000/- each
Banta Singh, Dalip Singh of Dhamian and Waryam Singh of Dhugga	Rs. 1000/- each
Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass and Anup Singh of Manko	Rs. 500/- each
Bishan Singh of Mangat	Rs. 400/-
Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjara	Rs. 200/- <sup>85</sup>

The Government adopted repressive measures to extort information about the Babbars and check new recruitment to the Babbar Jatha. According to one estimate 29 punitive police posts

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83. Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. XXVI, op. cit., pp. 487-89

84. Home-Political, File No. 179/1929.

85. Makhsupuri, S.S., Balihar Akali Sehar, op. cit., p. 227.



were set up by August 29, 1923 and 26 out of these were in the Doaba alone.<sup>86</sup> These were set up in Daulatpur, Pindori Nijjaran, Haripur, Pindori Ganga Singh, Ghurial, Kandhola, Bulhowal, Moranwali, Dhamian Kalan, Jassowal, Behbalpur, Chahalpur, Sirhala, Moila, Manannhana, Furki Khas, Patara, Khuradpur, Tannauli, Dhakowal, Harkhowal, Pander Bibi, Massanian, Kandhali, Bahli, Kalra, Banga, Jhingar, Aur, Mahal Gehla, Manko, Kot Fatuhi and Chandsu. The number of arrests went on mounting. Till August 10, 1923, about 400 Akalis were arrested on the suspicion of being Babbar Akalis.<sup>87</sup> The Panjab Darpan had earlier protested against the arrest of the innocent Akalis and besieging of the villages.<sup>88</sup> The 'Babbar Sher' in its issue of June 28 also wrote that people were not engaged in riotous actions or seditious propaganda and there was no necessity for sending the police and military in large numbers.<sup>89</sup> The police adopted ruthless measures to cull out information. It also offered handsome rewards to weaken the movement. Buta Singh was arrested on 14th August, 1923 from Dichkot Manko.<sup>90</sup>

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86. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.40. But the number of the punitive posts exceeds the figure given by him. Also vide Makhsupuri, S.S. Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit. p.298. Also see, Akali Te Pardesi, May 21, June 1 & 2, 1923, Pardesi Khalsa, May 19, 1923.

87. The Panjab Darpan, Amritsar, August 10, 1923.

88. Ibid., June 15, 1923.

89. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, June 28, 1923.

90. Vide Interview with Veteran Babbar Buta Singh at his residence at 28-Vasant Vihar, Jullundur, on 20.11.1982. Also vide Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.684 Statement of Lala Jawahar Lal Inspector Police who arrested Buta Singh on 14.8.1923 from the house of Kartar Singh Dichkot Manko, District Lyallpur.

After Santa Singh's confessional statement, were arrested Banta Singh of Behbalpur on August 28, 1923, Milkha Singh of Moranwali, Basant Singh of Randhawa Masandan, Chhaja Singh of Massanian, Bawa Singh and Udham Singh of Pindori Nijjaran on September 1, 1923. Jawand Singh was arrested on 3rd September, 1923. Munsha Singh of Johal on 4th September, Amar Singh of Rajowal on 6th September, Partap Singh of Sialkot District on September 7, Wattan Singh of Ganeshpur and Thakar Singh of Bharta on September 9, 1923. Kirpal Singh of Malakwal was arrested on 18th September, Narain Singh of Chattiwind on 19th October and Man Singh of Gujjaranwala District on October 26, 1923.

But the biggest blow was administered to the Babbar Akali movement when Anup Singh an important member of the Babbar Jatha proved traitor. Anup Singh had been seduced and played traitor as Kabul Singh and Sant Kartar Singh had done earlier. There is but a small step from sublime to the ridiculous. The Babbars faced their hour of adversity with heroic courage and blazed a new trail.

Heroic Encounters: The first in the series was the Babeli carnage. On August 31, 1923 S. Karam Singh, Editor, Uday Singh, Bishan Singh of Mangat, Mohinder Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh alongwith Anup Singh were going from Domeli to stay at the latter place till the afternoon of September 1, 1923. It is significant that Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur and Dalipa of Dhamian too were with them at Domeli, but Dhanna Singh, sensing

some danger from Anup Singh, declined to go to Babeli. He also warned S. Karam Singh to beware of him. When Karam Singh paid no heed, Dhanna Singh and Dalipa left for Narur and the others left for Babeli.<sup>91</sup> On the way Anup Singh managed to get Karam Singh's permission to see his sick maternal aunt. This was only a pretext. Actually he used this time to send his cousin Niranjan Singh to Manko to his uncle Bogh Singh to execute the plan as already decided. He, himself, went straight to Mehar Singh's house at Babeli but the Babbars had still not reached there. He sent Mehar Singh to enquire about them towards Domeli. Mehar Singh was relieved to see that the four Babbars were coming when he told about Anup Singh, Karam Singh told Mehar Singh to send Anup Singh to Shiv Singh's house but Anup Singh did not go there on the lame excuse of stomach-ache.

Anup Singh had been seduced by his uncle Bogh Singh through his wife and in-laws. He joined the Babbar Jatha in March, 1923 and took part in the murders of Genda Singh of Ghurial on 17th April, 1923 and that of Balla and Dittu of Kaulgarh on May 20, 1923. The twin weapons of repression and rewards had weakened the spirit of many a Babbar and Anup Singh was no exception.

Anup Singh's message reached Bogh Singh at Manko, who immediately contacted Mr. Smith at 4 a.m. after covering a

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91. Vide Interview with Inder Singh Kirti of Thandian who told the writer on the authority of Shiv Singh of Babeli.

distance of 18 miles.<sup>92</sup> Mr. Smith woke up Mr. Jacob, Deputy Commissioner of Jullundur early in the small hours of 1st. September, 1923 and told him about the information received about the whereabouts of some of the principal leaders of the Babbar Akali Jatha. Immediately arrangements were made in consultation with Colonel Commanding with a force of cavalry to go round and surround the village of Babeli where the Babbars were lurking. Mr. Smith with captain Maccleary and Mr. Unitt, A.S.P. left in the morning with the cavalry and police force.<sup>93</sup> On the other hand, Anup Singh, lay in the house of Mehar Singh and avoided conjunction with the Babbars who had stayed in the house of Shiv Singh. He had managed to damage the ammunition of the party except a gun which Karam Singh carried with him.<sup>94</sup> The police reached the village at 8 a.m. It was Paul Kaur w/o Mehar Singh who shouted that the police had surrounded the village. On hearing this Anup Singh slipped out of the house in a jiffy. When Karam Singh and others came to know of it on reaching Mehar Singh's house, everything became clear to them. They had become victim of Anup Singh's treachery.

Anup Singh, the traitor, had acted as guide to the cavalry. He informed Mr. Smith, Superintendent of Police, C.I.D., Punjab that the rest of the Jatha was still in the village and

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92. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.177.

93. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.1766.

94. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.59.

and requested Smith to put him in a place of safety.<sup>95</sup> Immediately Mr. Smith asked Captain Maccleary to open fire.<sup>96</sup> Karam Singh of Daulatpur, too, said his final prayer and tried to find his way to the eastern side of the village. He fired a shot to escape but the military had surrounded the Babbars. Weaponless, they could not perform miracles. Mr. Smith tried to persuade them to surrender but the Babbar heroes knew not how to surrender. They unsheathed their swords and compelled Mr. Smith to retreat for safety. For 1½ hour the grim drama went on.<sup>97</sup> Finally, the Babbars rushed to the Gurdwara Chaunta Sahib, across a small stream. The police, anxious to capture them alive, hotly chased them. When Mr. Smith found that the group was trying to swim across a strip of water which was too deep to be fordable and were making bid to hide in a clump of reeds on the bank of the stream, the firing was, again, started. Captain Maccleary went back to the village while Smith's Sowars ascertained whether the Akalis were dead or still alive. When the detachment started examining the bodies one man suddenly rose to his feet and brandished his kirpan. He attacked a constable and cutting his breeches ran to the eastern side of the peninsula in which the Gurdwara was situated.<sup>98</sup> Then again shooting ensued and all the Babbars died in the shooting. They were identified as Karam Singh,

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95. Ibid., p.60.

96. Loc.cit.

97. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.182.

98. Home Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.61.



Udey Singh, Mohinder Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh and Bishan Singh of Mangat. True to their word, the Babbar leaders fought to the last, but did not surrender. Theirs was the first struggle of its kind in contemporary annals and was reminiscent of the traditional Sikh spirit. Truly, the brave man falls, he cannot yield. This encounter occurred on September 1, 1923.<sup>99</sup>

Home Department in its letter No.2308 of September 3, jubilantly informed the Government of India reproducing the telegram of D.C.Jullundur which carried the message as under-

"Mounted police supported by a squadron of cavalry rounded up main Babbar gang at Babeli village in Phagwara. The gang put up fight and troops compelled to fire with result four killed including Karam Singh...Smith showed great courage and all deserve highest commendation."<sup>100</sup>

Mr. Smith was all praise for Captain Macleary who surrounded

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99. Labh Singh Jassoal, Sankhshp Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.93; Sadhu Singh Patara, Master Mota Singh Ji, Jivani, op.cit., p.50; Dr.Mohinder Singh, The Akali Movement, op.cit., Satya M.Rai, Panjabī Heroic Tradition, op.cit., p.82, seen to be confused about the date. They mention the date of the encounter as August 31, 1923. Actually, the Babbars had started for Babeli from Domeli on this date. Report of Mr. Smith, vide Home Political File no.134/II/23 p.58 and letter No.2308 dated 3.9.1923 of H.D.Craik, Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab to Mr.Crerar, Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, vide Home Political File No.134/II/23 p.52, sets at rest all confusion about the date of the encounter.

100. Home Political, File 134/II/1923, p.53.

the village to make the operation a success. He stated that "his squadron consisted of 67 rank and file. The Police sowars numbered 81, one of the cavalry chargers received three shots in the neck causing flesh wounds. There was no other casualties on our side".<sup>101</sup>

The Doaba atrocities culminating in the Babeli encounter left no one untouched. The 'Akali Te Pardesi' in its issue of September 6, 1923 called Babeli encounter a fake one and wrote that no one should be killed on suspicion. It pointed out that the police should have arrested the offenders and had them punished by a regular court of law.<sup>102</sup> The 'Panjab Darpan' expressed pity and sympathy at the death of the Babars. It wrote that though the Babars had followed a wrong path yet theirs was a selfless sacrifice. It urged the government to think cool-headedly what led the Babars to follow this path.<sup>103</sup> The blood too boiled in the veins of the American Sikhs and they collected Rs. 37,000/- for the relief of the families of the Doaba Akalis who had made unique sacrifices.<sup>104</sup><sup>105</sup>

Even the S.G.P.C. was roused from slumber. It sent two enquiry committees. The first Enquiry Committee comprised

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101. Ibid., p.63.

102. The Panjab Press Abstract XXXIV, September 15, 1923, p.477.

103. The Panjab Darpan, September 7, 1923.

104. The Akali Te Pardesi, September 18, 1923.

105. The Panjab Press Abstract, XXXIV, September 22, 1923, p.507.

S.Gureharan Singh, S.Khazan Singh, S.Mann Singh, S.Sangat Singh, M.L.C. and Bhai Jodh Singh, M.A.<sup>106</sup> The Second Enquiry Committee consisting of S. Surmukh Singh Jhabal, President S.A.D., S. Gurcharan Singh, Secretary, S.G.P.C., and S.Gopal Singh of the Akali Te-Pardesi reached Ghurial on September 7, 1923, but the committee was not allowed to inquire and was subsequently arrested.<sup>107</sup> The fact had been conceded by Mr. C.A.H. Townsend, Chief Secretary, Panjab, in a letter to the Secretary Government of India. It was admitted that the S.G.P.C. sent an enquiry committee to Jullundur on 7th July comprising Bhai Khazan Singh, S. Sangat Singh and S.Gureharan Singh. It spent a few hours at Jullundur, visited Pindori Nijjaran and recorded some evidence in camera. Another committee was appointed in the beginning of September 1923 consisting of S.Gopal Singh Quami, S.Sarmukh Singh of Jhabal and S.Gureharan Singh Vakil. This committee left Amritsar on September 6, 1923 and reached Ghurial on 7th September. Action was taken against these members u/s 107 C.P.C., but then they crossed into Hoshiarpur. It held enquiries on 10th and 11 September in Kot Fatuhi, Moranwali and Behbalpur. The Deputy Commissioner of Hoshiarpur ordered them to stop the enquiry. On their refusal to stop the enquiry they were arrested on 13th September, 1923.<sup>108</sup>

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106. Copy of the Proceedings of the S.G.P.C., Register No.3, p.53.

107. The Panjab Darpan, Amritsar, September 14, 1923.

108. Home Political, File No.134/II/1923, pp.92-93, Letter No.8350-SB from C.A.H. Townsend, Chief Secretary of the Government of Panjab to the Secretary, Government of India.

According to the statement of S.Bhag Singh Canadian, the enquiry committee consisted of S. Sarmukha Singh Jhabal, S.Gopal Singh Singh Qaumi, S.Bhag Singh himself, S.Ram Singh Judge and S.Gureharan Singh Vakil. It went to Khuradpur, Manak, Ghurial, Adampur, Pindori Nijjaran, Rajowal, Pindori Mahatman and Shamchaurasi. The people of Shamchaurasi were so terror-stricken that they did not extend any co-operation and the members of the enquiry committee had to sleep in an animal yard on cane-trash. Next day, they reached Dhamian, Bulhowal, Moranwali and Jassowal. It was here that the members of the enquiry committee were arrested.<sup>109</sup> Gopal Singh 'Qaumi', a member of the Doaba enquiry committee, stated: "When we were going from Moranwali to Jassowal in the Hoshiarpur District, where we were arrested, the police constables were going in front of us and coming in our rear, with guns in their hands. We were shocked to hear the tales of the Doaba people .... either God or the Doaba people know how much they suffered at the hands of the police."<sup>110</sup> The sting of the government was very severe. It put every conceivable hurdle to stop the different bodies to institute and send enquiry committees so that ruthless and oppressive policy and the excesses of the police might not be exposed.

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109. Josh, Sohan Singh, Akali Morchian De Itbas, op.cit.p.281.

110 . Akali Leader's Conspiracy, case p.1000, (printed) and p.4000 of the manuscript(Statement of Gopal Singh Qaumi).

The Provincial Congress Committee had sent Maulvi Lal Hussain to ascertain the facts about the Doaba affairs on the spot and his findings shocked and stunned the Congress leaders.<sup>111</sup> The S.G.P.C. also suspected that the Government of the Panjab wanted to crush the Akali movement under the pretext of the Doaba murders.<sup>112</sup>

The high-handedness of the government compelled the S.G.P.C. to adopt a policy which was tantamount to virtual surrender. The Babbar Akalis rightly complained that the S.G.P.C. - the representative body of the Sikhs - was opposed to their activities and was actually obstructing their work by withdrawing gewaks for otherwise they would have been counted as an association."<sup>113</sup>

#### Mannanbhana Episode

The next blow to the Babbars came in the death of their valiant leader, Dhanna Singh. If Anup Singh's desertion at Babeli gave a staggering blow to the movement, the perfidy of Jawala Singh Zian further shattered the Babbar strength. He was brother of Bela Singh of Zian a police agent and a spy of international notoriety, who had killed Bhai Bhag Singh and

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111. The Akali-Te-Pardeesi, Amritsar, June 9, 1923.

112. Copy of the Proceedings of the S.G.P.C., Amritsar, Register No.3, Gurmata No.7, p.53.

113. The Tribune, Lahore, 31 August, 1923, p.7.



and Wattan Singh in Vancouvre Gurdwara on September 5, 1914, in Canada. Jawala Singh had won the confidence of Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur and posed himself to be inimical to Bela Singh and often helped the Babbars. After Babeli encounter, he advised Dhanna Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian to seek refuge in the Bar area, away from Doaba. Dalipa went with him and was got arrested on October 12, 1923 at Mian Channu railway station. On his return, he was not even suspected by Dhanna Singh. Instead, he too acted as Jawala Singh bade him to do. Jawala Singh told Dhanna Singh not to stay at his house at Zian as police kept surveillance over him and instead he was told to take shelter in his sugarcane fields. Jawala Singh, in the meantime, hatched a plot. Alongwith sub-inspector Gulzara Singh of Mahelpur police Station, he met Superintendent police Hoshiarpur, Mr. A.F. Horton and the plot to arrest Dhanna Singh was finalised there and then. He was to be arrested on 25th October, 1923. Finalising the details, Jawala Singh reached Zian on 24th October, took Dhanna Singh on 25th morning and set out for Mannanhana. During the first half of night he was kept busy in gossip and was not allowed to have a wink of sleep. Then he was asked to go to sleep. Jawala Singh and his relative Karam Singh took upon themselves the duty of keeping vigil when Dhanna Singh went to bed.<sup>114</sup> His weapons were removed and they anxiously awaited

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114. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS), Ch. 44, Karam Singh was brother-in-law of Kartar Singh Burro Barrian, a member of the Babbar Jatha. He was cousin of Jawala Singh. Thus Dhanna Singh was caught in their net without suspecting that his comrades and their relatives were acting in a treacherous manner.

the arrival of the police. The police party consisting of 40 policemen under A.F.Horton, S.P., and Mr.W.H.P.Jenkins, A.S.P., Hoshiarpur surrounded Karam Singh's Haveli and about half a dozen policemen pounced upon Dhanna Singh.<sup>115</sup> He was handcuffed immediately. Mr. Horton was jubilant at this prize catch and chided Dhanna Singh for having arrested him alive. Dhanna Singh's fiery look frightened Horton, who ordered Dhanna Singh to be blindfolded. At this Dhanna Singh taunted him to be too timid to do the same himself to a menaced person. When Horton came nearer, he exploded a hand grenade which he had hidden under his armpit.<sup>116</sup> The blast killed Dhanna Singh, nine policemen, and a buffalo.<sup>117</sup> It may be added that out of these nine policemen, three police constables, one head constable and a Dafedar were killed on the spot while 4 were seriously wounded. These four included A.F.Horton S.P., W.H.P. Jenkins, A.S.P., Gulzara Singh Sub-Inspector and one constable. The last two died after their arrival at Mahalpur while Mr.Horton died of internal haemorrhage in the hospital at Hoshiarpur on November 3, 1923 and Mr. Jenkins on his way to U.K. at Calcutta.<sup>118</sup> The event is matchless and one may search

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115. Home-Political File No. 245/1926, p.112.

116. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.206.

117. Loc.cit.

118. Makhaspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.192.

history of this region in vain to find a parallel to it.

The Activities of the Babbar involved in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, Supplementary II

The active members of the organisation, still at large, were Banta Singh of Dhamian, Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass and Waryam Singh of Dhugga. With the assistance of new recruits to the movement they committed dacoities at Bassi Johal,<sup>119</sup> Waddala Pukhta and at Dhogri Railway station. They were also responsible for a dacoity with murder at Kotli Bawa Dass in Mohiarpur as well as a dacoity at Sangaranwali and a robbery in Sikandarpur in Jullundur District between the middle of October and the first week of December, 1923.<sup>120</sup>

The dacoity and murder at Kotli Bawa Dass needs special mention. It took place on November 13, 1923. Banta Singh of Dhamian, Waryam Singh of Dhugga and Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass, Nikka Singh, Teja Singh and Gian Singh of Alowal and Bachint Singh of Dumunda<sup>121</sup> assembled at the well of Niranjan Singh. From the well they proceeded to the village and attacked Jawala Singh and Narain Singh, notorious money-lenders of Kotli Bawa Dass. Narain Singh was robbed of ornaments and

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119. Babbar Akali case judgement, 1925, p.58.

120. Home-Political, Department, File No. 200/1926, p.17. The account is based on the 95 page 'Brief History of the Babbar Akali Movement' prepared by Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Aziz.

121. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p. 147. Sunder Singh belittles these Babbars by calling them dacoits. Also vide Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Lehar, op.cit., p.319.

cash and his account books were also burnt but his life was spared, while his brother Jawala Singh was murdered for his anti-Babbar activities.<sup>122</sup> They escaped police witch hunt by using Montgomery and Lyallpur districts as places of refuge where they also endeavoured to form branches of their movement.<sup>123</sup> The police conducted enquiries in the Montgomery District where it was found that Jawala Singh and others had also committed a murder for robbery and the nucleus of another Babbar organisation had been formed.<sup>124</sup> This was the only group of active Babbars which the police failed to trap. Once again, the treachery of a so-called sympathiser proved tragic.

Munder Tragedy: On December 12, 1923, Waryam Singh Dhugga, Banta Singh Dhamian and Jawala Singh Fatehpur Kothi were staying in the house of Jagat Singh of Munder. He informed the officer Incharge of Adampur police station, through Udham Singh, a police constable posted at Shan Chaurasi, about the presence of the Babbars in his house. The police officer of Adampur police station further conveyed information to Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Aziz at Jullundur. The latter met Mr. W.C. Jacob, Deputy Commissioner, Jullundur at about 11.30 a.m. The Deputy Commissioner, W.C. Jacob and the Superintendent of Police Mr. Fitzgerald then set out to work.

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122. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p.8. Also vide Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.273.

123. Home-Political Department, File No.200/1926, p:17.

124. Loc.cit.

They, alongwith Khan Bahadur Abdul Aziz, made arrangements for a force of cavalry and directed it to meet them at Adampur. They also arranged for a force of police to come out in lorries, while they went on to Adampur to wait for them. The cavalry went cross-country to Munder. The Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police as well as Khan Bahadur Sheikh Abdul Aziz waited for the police to arrive for a considerable time. Finally, they decided to go to Munder with the police force at their disposal and reached there at about 4.30 p.m. Mr. W.C. Jacob took position on the southern side of the village, while Mr. Fitzgerald was on the northern side. Suddenly, firing ensued and several shots passed over them. The cavalry was still at a distance of some 2 miles.<sup>125</sup> The Babbars took shelter in the 'chaubara' of a carpenter. The police got vacated the whole village. The Babbars were aware of their impending fate, but they remained in high spirits. They resounded the sky with the shouts of 'Sat Sri Akal' and declared, in a loud voice, that they would not surrender.

The police party then trained a machine gun on the Chubara. Some rounds were fired. The Babbar Akalis, who possessed two guns and one revolver, also returned fire. From another machine gun, fire was also opened on the chubara but it was found impossible to make any impression owing to the strong position taken up by the Babbars. These operations

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125. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, case, p.767.



continued for sometime and it was finally decided to set fire to the chubara. The Babbars tried to escape but two of them were hit and killed. It was Waryam Singh of Dhugga who escaped after inflicting severe wounds on one of the police constables.<sup>126</sup> He escaped to Daulatpur and took shelter with Surain Singh who got the services of a medical practitioner from Alawalpur for his treatment maintaining perfect secrecy.<sup>127</sup>

Waryam Singh Dhugga was the last of the Babbar heroes who created scare in the bureaucratic echelon and created panic among the toadies. He made a bid to activate the Movement, once again, after his escape from Munder. He went to Lyallpur in Chak No.54 and stayed with his maternal uncle Dalel Singh of Sirhala. After sometime he came back to the Doaba.

There was still some life in the remnant group as evidenced by the commission of a dacoity at Sherpur Pukhta in Hoshiarpur and another at Bal in Jullundur in the first week of February, 1924.<sup>128</sup> The Babbar Jatha consisting of Waryam Singh of Dhugga, Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass, Nikka Singh and Banta Singh of Alowal, Munsha Singh of Samranwan and Surain Singh of Kang Mai went to murder Anant Ram of Sherpur but the attempt was without any result as he was

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126. Home Political, File No.245/1926, p.117.

127. Vide letter No.5.Surain Singh Babbar to the writer, dated September 26, 1983.

128. Home-Political File No.200/1926, p.17.

not in the village and even his house was found locked.<sup>129</sup>

A clue to the offenders in these cases was, however, quickly obtained and various minor arrests were made. In March, Nand Singh was arrested in Amritsar District and a few days later, Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass was captured from Sab-hraon in Lahore District.<sup>130</sup>

In April 1924, Waryam Singh escaped to Lyallpur and took refuge with Ralla Singh of Dichkot Manko whose sister was married to Waryam Singh's cousin (son of Dalel Singh, maternal uncle of Waryam Singh). There he organised a group, consisting of Naurang Singh of Guruser Satlani, Sunder Singh Lohke, Gujjar Singh of Dhapai, Mukand Singh Jassewal, Nikka Singh of Gill, Ralla Singh and Isher Singh of Dichkot Manko. They planned to 'reform' Mohan Singh, headman of Chak No.96 and consequently attacked and shot him dead. His son, a nephew and a farm hand were also shot dead.

Waryam Singh also fell victim to the machinations of his relatives, Dalel Singh and Ralla Singh. On May 21, 1924, Ralla Singh informed the Incharge of Thikriwala police station that Waryam Singh had taken shelter in the fields of Buta Singh of Chak Dhapai, station Sir Sameer (Lyallpur). He was

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129. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (Mss), Ch.47 is not correct about the date of attack on Jawahar Lambardar of Sangaranwali and Anant Ram of Sherpur. He places these incidents in March 1924.

130. Home-Political File No.200/1926, p.17.

surrounded by Sub-Inspector Gehna Singh, one head constable and ten constables.<sup>131</sup> Waryam Singh showed marvellous courage and was able to escape by breaking the police cordon inspite of the fact that he was badly wounded. The police superintendent suspended the police party due to the cowardice shown in this action. Then 3 squares of land were announced as reward for Waryam Singh's arrest.<sup>132</sup> He took refuge with his relatives who nursed him till his wounds recovered. Waryam Singh failed to see through the game of his relatives.<sup>133</sup> They continued their nefarious game. They informed Mr. Degale, Superintendent of Police on June 1, 1924 about the whereabouts of Waryam Singh.<sup>134</sup> On 7th June, 1924, Ralla Singh contacted, Sahib Ditta Mal, a Commission agent of Jhang Bazar, Lyallpur to inform the police and told him that Waryam Singh had taken refuge in Chak No. 54, in the Dera of Mangal Singh. His weapons were also stolen. Degale arrived with a strong police contingent on June 8, 1924 at Chak No. 54. Waryam Singh was, then, in the fields. Sensing some danger he rushed to a hut where he had kept his gun. With this single gun, he encountered the police party. He fired shot after shot shutting himself inside the hut. Finally he came out of the hut and fired two shots at Degale.

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131. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Fudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit. p.259.

132. The Akali, May 30, 1924 and Akali Te Pardesi, June 7, 1924.

133. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., pp.65-66.

134. The Babbar Sher, June 14, 1924.

The latter had aimed 6 shots at Waryam Singh but all had misfired. Suddenly, Waryam Singh jumped at Degale and grappled with him.<sup>135</sup> Degale had emptied his revolver at him without any success. Waryam Singh drew his sword and wounded him on the right arm. Meanwhile, Sahib Ditta Mall came to Degale's rescue and managed to throw Waryam Singh on the ground. This struggle came to an end only when Police Inspector, Buta Ram reached the spot.<sup>136</sup> He claimed to have fired four shots at Waryam Singh which left him dead.<sup>137</sup> It was a befitting finale of the Babbar heroism in the Bar area.

With the death of Waryam Singh the only operation to be undertaken, had been "clearing up" and then there was II supplementary case with 38 additional accused ready for trial, bringing the total number of the accused against whom evidence had been collected of active participation in the conspiracy to 169 of whom 8 were still at large, they being, however, men of minor importance.<sup>138</sup>

Of these accused no fewer than 54 were those who served in the army and 8 were returned emigrants. The enquiries had resulted in the working out of 32 cases committed

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135. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, June 14, 1924.

136. Loc.cit.

137. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.776.

138. Home Political, Proceedings, File No. 200/1926, p.17.

by the Babbars, besides 9 miscellaneous cases of murder. Action was taken u/s 107 of C.P.C. against more than 100 persons and 96 cases u/s 216 of I.P.C. were dealt with by a special magistrate.<sup>139</sup> During this brief period, the Babbars were able to eliminate 147 toadies and traitors including policemen.<sup>140</sup> The police was able to decimate the Movement by ambushing the Babbars at Babeli, Munder and Mannanhana. Many of them were arrested. Apart from stolen property in the shape of jewellery, the recoveries included 4 bombs, 6 shot-guns, 11 revolvers, 6 swords, 5 ehavis, 285 cartridges and one detonator.<sup>141</sup> They were tried in various cases leading to the executions and long terms of rigorous imprisonment.

#### The Babbar Trials and Executions:

The Babbar conspiracy case was one of the most exciting cases in the recent history. The main Babbar conspiracy case against 94 including 17 approvers and 15 absconders was sent up for trial on August 15, 1923. The arrests upto the time totalled 226 of whom 104 were presented in the court u/s 107 of C.P.C.<sup>142</sup> The case was deferred to August 17, 1923 due to the arrest of Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjara on August 14, 1923.<sup>143</sup>

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139. Loc.cit.

140. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.245/1926, p.111.

141. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.200/1926, p.34.

142. Ibid., p.16.

143. Loc. cit.



The Dabbars were tried on charges of criminal conspiracy, importation and possession of arms, ammunition and stealing from military stores, going armed without a licence, murder, attempt to murder, grievous hurt, robbery with hurt and murder in dacoity. Five others i.e. Lakha Singh, Bawa Singh, Bhulla Singh Kot Fatuhi, Jagat Singh Plahi and Gokal Singh Simbli were discharged by the magistrate. Out of the absconders, Karam Singh Daulatpuri, Udey Singh and Bishan Singh were killed at Babeli on September 1, 1923; Dhanna Singh met his heroic end at Mannankhana on October 25, 1923; Javala Singh Fatehpur Kothi and Banta Singh Dhamian were killed in an encounter at Munder on December 12, 1923, while Waryam Singh Dhugga was killed on June 8, 1924. Anup Singh Manko, Nasara Singh Munder and Dhanna Singh Kotli Bawa Dass turned approvers. Dalip Singh s/o Labh Singh was accused in the Supplementary Case I (Trial No. II), while Nand Singh Dharival was hanged in another case, while three were still at large.<sup>144</sup> Amar Singh s/o Natha Singh Mandhiani and Gurbachan Singh s/o Mali of Daulatpur and one more could never be arrested. Dhanna Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass was arrested on March 27, 1924 about a week before the Main and Supplementary cases were committed to Sessions Judge, J.K.M. Tapp.<sup>145</sup> Dhanna Singh became an approver in

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144. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 245/1926, p. 1.

145. Home-Political Proceedings, File No. 200/1926, p. 17.

the Supplementary Case II. Thus there were 62 Babbars who were challaned on August 17, 1923. The counsels of the Babbars were Lala Raghu Nath Sahai engaged by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and Durga Dass, engaged by the District Congress Committee Hoshiarpur to fight the Babbar cases.<sup>146</sup> Investigation of the conspiracy was still on, while the main case was being inquired into by the magistrate with the result that on January 29, 1924 another Supplementary case involving 36 persons was brought before the same magistrate. The committing magistrate charged 55 accused in the main case and 36 in the supplementary case. Both the cases were committed to Sessions on April 4, 1924. The trial started on June 2, 1924, in the court of J.K.M. Tapp Esq., additional sessions judge, Punjab, at Lahore, with the aid of 4 selected assessors. The case was known as Trial No. II of 1924, King Emperor versus Kishan Singh and others.<sup>147</sup> Lala Pindi Dass was Public Prosecutor. Out of 91 Babbars, nine did not engage any counsel. They totally boycotted the court proceedings calling it a mock trial. Lala Raghu Nath Sahai appeared on behalf of 76 Babbars while the government engaged Ram Lal, a non-entity to defend 6 Babbars who were not in a position to engage any counsel.<sup>148</sup>

The manner and the method of the trial was most unjust

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146. Nahar Singh, Asadi Dian Lehran, op.cit., p.323.

147. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.245/1926, p.1.

148. Nahar Singh, Asadi Dian Lehran, op.cit., p.324.

and it was rightly condemned by the press. The Tribune, in its issue of 10th August, 1923, wrote: 'The trial of the Babbar Akalis within the closed doors of a central jail will lay the government open to further charge that the accused were not treated fairly.'<sup>149</sup> It was also held outside the district and the division. It amounted to discourage the defence counsel to produce witnesses freely and cheaply. The exclusion of the press representatives and holding the trial in jail and that too in camera, was interpreted as a step to block fair trial. The 'Nation' in its issue of August 16, 1923, observed: 'It seems that the procedure in these cases is going to be peculiarly novel and unprecedented. The cases are not going to be tried under any particular emergency law, but will be conducted according to the ordinary criminal code. If that is the case, we fail to understand why the privileges under the law should not be fully extended to the accused. The justice must preceed, may supersede, all considerations of political necessity, if any. In this case particularly, the need of justice is greater, when it is remembered that the procedure under which arrests were made and evidence was collected was anything but satisfactory.'<sup>150</sup>

The 'Khalsa' of August 25, The 'Milap' and the 'Partap' of August 20, 1923 unanimously condemned the procedure of the

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149. The Panjab Press Abstracts, Lahore, Vol. XXXIV, dated 18th August, 1923, p. 425.

150. The Nation, Lahore, August 16, 1923.

trial . 'The Tribune' in its issue of August 18, 1923, commented: "Securing the conviction of the accused persons is not the only thing. The government must also see that the trial is properly and fairly conducted and the public is convinced of the guilt of the persons found guilty."<sup>151</sup> The pro-government 'Civil and Military Gazette' also criticised the official stand as it was likely to give ground to the enemies of the government to spread rumours which could be scotched by full publicity alone.

The criticism of the press failed to affect the course of the trial to any appreciable extent. The Judge allowed, despite crown counsel's objections, the admittance of the press, provided the gentlemen writing to representing newspapers satisfy the court of their bonafides.<sup>152</sup> They were also debarred from publishing reports without scrutiny by the court. The conduct of the National Press was not also worthy of its name. None took the trouble of sending reports highlighting the facts. The false statements of the witnesses obtained by the police under duress were gullibly accepted.<sup>153</sup> Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj in his 125 page statement, too, brought to light the attempts of the police to throw dust in the eyes of justice by hoodwinking the court and producing false witnesses.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> The Tribune, Lahore, August 18, 1923.

<sup>152</sup>. Ibid., August 30, 1923.

<sup>153</sup>. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.17.

<sup>154</sup>. Ibid., p.138.

He also castigated the S.G.P.C. for its indifference to the Babbar Akalis and its failure to enquire the truth. He maintained that it could have verified the facts from three of its members, namely, S. Dalip Singh (Sadhara), S. Udham Singh (Jandoo Singha) and Subedar Amar Singh (Dhaliwal), who were also arrested in this case. The indifference of the Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. gave free hand to the Government.<sup>155</sup>

Mr. J.K.M. Tapp, Additional Sessions Judge, Lahore, delivered his judgement on February 28, 1925, awarding death-sentence to 5, life-sentence to 11 and various terms of imprisonment to 38 others, while only 34 were acquitted.<sup>156</sup> Three of the accused, namely, Amar Singh and Sadha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, and Waryam Singh of Kot Patuhi died during the trial.

The judgement was very harsh. The appeal was filed in the High Court. The judges of the High court who heard the appeal, were Mr. Broadway and Mr. Harrison. They delivered their judgement on January 19, 1926<sup>157</sup> awarding death-sentence to 6 and life-sentence to thirteen. About 29 were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment while 40 were acquitted.<sup>158</sup>

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155. Ibid., p.140.

156. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.261. Also vide, Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(Mse), p.444.

157. The Sangat, Lahore, February 7, 1926.  
 158. Makhsuspur, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.254.  
 Also vide Home-Political Proceedings, File No.112-IV/1926.



The petitions were filed for mercy to the Government of India on and before February 18, 1926. The Counsel of the Babbars based his case on the following grounds:

1. The movement which came into existence in 1922 has been totally exterminated by this time.
2. Eight of the accused were killed at Babeli, Mannanhana etc.
3. Twenty two tendered pardon and were made approvers.
4. Almost all the accused connected with the Babbar Akali Movement had made confessions to the police.<sup>159</sup>
5. Some 70 persons made confessions.

But the petitions for mercy were rejected as the Government of India considered the conspiracy as one of the most serious menace to the public safety and the Governor-General observed that a very strong case would be required for interference which certainly did not exist.<sup>160</sup>

On February 17, 1926, Lala Raghu Nath Sahai had received a telegram from the Government of India that execution of death sentence had been postponed and their petitions were under consideration and it was added that any petition in this regard be filed upto February 20, 1926.<sup>161</sup> Despite this, 6 Babbars were sent to the gallows on February 27, 1926.<sup>162</sup>

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159. Home Political K.W.II, File No.245/1926, p.11.

160. Ibid., p.2.

161. The Akali-Te-Pardesi, Amritsar, February 26, 1926.

162. The Sangat, March 7, 1926.

The Sher-i-Panjab', in its issue of March 7, urged its investigation.<sup>163</sup>

Six Babbars executed on February 27, 1926, were S. Kishan Singh Birring, Karam Singh Haripur, Babu Santa Singh of Chhoti Herion, Nand Singh Ghural, Dharam Singh Hayatpur and Dalipa of Dhamian. At first, the jail authorities refused to hand over their dead bodies to their relatives, but the public pressure and fervent requests of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh and Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar led to the reversal of the official decision. The dead bodies were handed over to the claimants at about 2 a.m. on February 28, 1926 and those were consigned to the flames in the rear of Gurdwara Dera Sahib, on the banks of the Ravi.

The 'Akali-Te-Pardesi' and the 'Sangat' gave a detailed and exhaustive report of the Babbar executions. S. Kishan Singh, Babu Santa Singh and Dalipa Dhamian were hanged at 3 minutes past 8 a.m. on 27th February, 1926, while the second batch consisting of S. Nand Singh, S. Karam Singh of Haripur and Dharam Singh of Hayatpur were hanged 7 minutes past 9 a.m., the same day.<sup>164</sup>

The execution of the Babbar Akalis led to widespread resentment. The Babbars were glorified and were considered

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163. The Sher-i-Panjab, Lahore, March 7, 1926.

164. The Sangat, Lahore, 7 March 1926.

martyrs for the national cause. All those parties, which failed the Babbars in the hour of their peril, invited seathing public criticism. The Akali-Te-Pardesi' observed that on the day of Holi when maunds of red colour had been poured on the participants, the Babbars had also made the mother earth red with their blood.<sup>165</sup> S. Mangal Singh, editor of The Akali-Te-Pardesi' wrote: "What the Babbars did may be right or not, but one thing is certain that the common people consider their executions, an act of sacrifice for the country. They have been sent to the gallows because they wanted to liberate the country in their own particular way."<sup>166</sup> The 'Akali' considered 27th February, 1926, a bloody day and remarked that it would be remembered for ever in the annals of India because by the Babbar sacrifices, India had come nearer the goal of Independence.<sup>167</sup> According to the "Kirpan Bahadur", the government had further poured salt on the wounds of the Sikhs by executing the Babbars Akalis.<sup>168</sup> The "Babar Sher", in its issue of March 5, 1926, considered 27th February, as a doomsday for India. It observed that the S.G.P.C. and the Sikh League had committed a grave blunder in condemning the programme and policy of their brethern. Had the Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. not showed indifference to the Babbar Akalis, these bodies would not have been declared unlawful by the Panjab Government

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165. The Akali Te Pardesi, Amritsar, 3 March, 1926.

166. Ibid., March 4, 1926.

167. The Akali Amritsar, 4th March, 1926. Also vide Report on Newspapers and Periodicals in the Panjab No.10 of 1926, dated March 6, 1926.

168. The Kirpan Bahadur, Amritsar, March 4, 1926

and the Sikh Panth would not have been caught in the bureaucratic snare.<sup>169</sup>

The 'Qaumi Dard' of March 5, 1926 was very bold in its comment. It observed that neither death nor transportation for life would improve the situation. It concluded that the remedy lay in the setting up of a responsible government.<sup>170</sup> Even 'Zamindar' considered the executions most unstatesmanlike.<sup>171</sup> The Editorials of many a newspaper did not absolve the Sikh masses and the leadership of their guilt because their weak policy was responsible for the sad plight of the Babbars. The 'Hindustani', in its issue of the 7 March, 1926, squarely laid blame on the countrymen and wrote: "It is we who are responsible for the execution of the patriots".<sup>172</sup> S. Karam Singh of Jhingar, who was undergoing life-sentence in this case, wrote to the 'Desh-Sewak', Jullundur: 'The execution of the valiant Babbar Akalis is ascribable to the indifference of the selfish leaders of the community. If Master Mota Singh Akali, the pride of the community and Baba Kharak Singh, the uncrowned king of the Sikhs, had been out of jail, the tyrants would not have looked askance at these deceased patriots.'<sup>173</sup>

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169. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, March 5, 1926.

170. The Qaumi Dard, Amritsar, 5th March, 1926.

171. The Zamindar, Lahore, March 5, 1926.

172. The Hindustani, Lahore, March 7, 1926.

173. Vide the Desh Sewak, Jullundur, March 18, 1926.

The parting message of Jathedar Kishan Singh Garga was equally inspiring and left no doubt about the aims of the Babbar Movement. He said, "Convey my message to the nation that nothing will be obtained from the government by begging. Only sacrifices will avail."<sup>174</sup> He bade Sat Sri Akal to the "Sarbat Khalsa". These executions failed to curb the Babbar spirit.

There was another case in the court against the Babbar Akalis, namely Babbar Akali conspiracy case Supplementary II, called crown v/s Nikka Singh and others. Its incharge was C.I.D., Inspector Lala Buta Ram.

On 27th March, Dhanna Singh Kotli Bawa Dass was arrested from Sabhraon Police Station Patti, District Lahore. He was interrogated by the C.I.D. and his confession led to many arrests.<sup>175</sup> Ralla Singh's betrayal also led to the disclosure of the Babbar action at Chak No.96 where Waryam Singh Dhugga and his group shot 4 persons dead. The police arrested Nikka Singh Gill, Naurang Singh Gurusar Satlani, Mukund Singh Jassowal, Gujjar Singh Dhapal, Funder Singh Lohke and Isher Singh Dichkot Manko.

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174. Vide the Sangat Lahore, March 7, 1926.

175. Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik (ms), p.282, mentions the following arrests:- Kashmira Singh Sabhraon, Gurdit Singh, Alipur Gudda; Pala Singh Jaur Singhwala; Nikka Singh, Teja Singh, Gian Singh, Diwan Singh and Banta Singh Alowal; Rattan Singh Vein Bhoelin; Dhanna Singh and Chhajja Singh, Khaira Majha; Man Singh, Surain Singh Kang Mai; Bhan Singh and Labh Singh Randhawa Massandan; Rurra Bhasian; Surain Singh Daulatpur; Uddham Singh Sura-un-Nissi; Shiv Singh Kuthar; Kartar Singh Mokha; Bachint Singh and Lachhman Singh Dumunda; Lal Singh Raipur Rasulpur; Munsha Singh Samranvan; Bhola Singh Dhamian; Bhola Singh and Diwan Singh Adhkare Kathe; Kishan Singh Sandhara; Sadhu Singh and Gurdas Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass.



The case was heard by the trying magistrate Lala Sant Ram. Except Ralla Singh all the witnesses were of the main Babbar case. Dhanna Singh Khaira Majjha died during the trial, while Rattan Singh, Diwan Singh Adhkare Kathe, Pala Singh, Lal Singh, Ghulam Rasul, Nand Singh, Naurang Singh, Banta Singh and Gurdas Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass were let off.<sup>176</sup>

In March, 1925, Lala Sant Ram, committed the case to the sessions Judge.<sup>177</sup> Some of the Babbars like Hazara Singh of Munder and Harbakhsh Singh of Jasseval were involved in the main Babbar case. Hazara Singh was an approver who turned hostile and Harbakhsh Singh was an absconder. The Sessions Judge, Mr. E.S. Harris, held the trial in camera, at Lahore. All the accused denied the charge levelled against them. The Judge delivered his judgement on February 28, 1926 and awarded death sentence to 7; nineteen were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Only 2 were acquitted.<sup>178</sup>

Then, an appeal was filed in the High Court. The Bench consisted of Justice Broadways and Justice Harrison. Out of 7 who were condemned to death in the lower court, decision was changed only in respect of Ishar Singh. Out of others Harbakhsh Singh, Bhan Singh, Labh Singh and Sadhu Singh of Sandhara were acquitted.

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176. Ibid., p.286.

177. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(mss), p.455.

178. Vide the Akali-Te-Pardesi, March 3, 1926.

The six Babbars, namely Nikka Singh of Alowal, Sunder Singh of Lohke<sup>179</sup>, Banta Singh of Guruzar Satlani, Nikka Singh of Gill, Mukand Singh of Jassowal and Gujjar Singh of Dhapa 1 were sent to the gallows on February 27, 1927 and were cremated the same day in the cemetery of Shahmu's garden, at Lahore.<sup>180</sup>

Nikka Singh Alowal was awarded death sentence on the charge of murdering Jawala Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass on November 13, 1923, while others were held guilty for the murders committed at Chak No.96.<sup>181</sup>

The prominent Babbar Akalis in this case who were sentenced for life included Hazara Singh of Munder, Bhola Singh of Dhamian, Bachint Singh of Dumunda, Udham Singh of Sura-un-Nissi, Surain Singh of Daulatpur,<sup>182</sup> Gurdit Singh of Alipur Gudde<sup>183</sup>, Gian Singh of Alowal, Bhola Singh of Adhkare Kathe,<sup>184</sup> Kishan Singh of Sandhara, Surain Singh of Kang Mai, Munsha Singh of Samranwan, Banta Singh of Alowal, Diwan Singh of Alowal, Tej Singh of Alowal and Ishar Singh of Diehkot Nanko.

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179. Chopra, P.N., Who's Who of Indian Martyrs, Delhi, 1969, p.350.

180. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh, (ms), p.455. Also vide, Argi, March 1982, p.43.

181. loc.cit.

182. Vide letter of Surain Singh, dated 26th September, 1983 to the writer.

183. Chopra, P.N., Who's Who of Indian Martyrs, op.cit., p.125.

184. Fauja Singh, Who's who Panjab Freedom Fighters, op.cit., p.216.

The nature of this case has been much misunderstood. The court kept it separate from the Babbar case. Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri in his 'Babbar Akali Lehar', had toed the court.<sup>185</sup> Shiv Singh of Haripur,<sup>186</sup> Hardit Singh of Jassowal<sup>187</sup> also harp on the same strain whereas Buta Singh,<sup>188</sup> Milkha Singh<sup>189</sup> and Surain Singh of Daulatpur<sup>190</sup> emphatically call them Babbars. Khan Sahib Sheikh Abdul Aziz also termed it as Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II.<sup>191</sup> Though there were certain dacoits who were included in the case by the police to defame the Babbars, but that was always the plank of the police and it could not detract the value of their sacrifice. Rightly, Editor of the 'Akali-Te-Pardesi' S. Mangal Singh called it the Babbar Supplementary case,<sup>192</sup> and observed that the judgement in the case was very harsh. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar also called it the Supplementary Babbar Akali case.<sup>193</sup>

The Babbar Saga did not come to an end with these executions. The Babbars inside the jail defied the rigours

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185. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.352.

186. Vide Shiv Singh's letter, dated October 4, 1983 to the writer.

187. Vide his tape-recorded talk with the writer on September 8, 1983.

188. Vide his interview with the writer on 20.11.82.

189. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(mss), p.455.

190. Vide his letter to the writer on September 26, 1983.

191. Home-Deptt.(Political)File 200/1926, p.34.

192. Vide the Akali Te Pardesi, Lahore, March 4, 1926.

193. Vide the Sangat, Lahore, March 7, 1926.

of the jail with valiance, while outside, their exploits once again resounded the air for a long time.

The Babbars in the Jails: They continued their struggle even inside the jails. For them stones did not make a prison. They defied the unjust jail rules with the same courage as they had challenged the toadies, on April 26, 1925, the Babbars resorted to hunger-strike. It continued for 1½ months and was a sequel to the maladministration of Lahore jail.<sup>194</sup> Hazara Singh of Munder, Bhola Singh of Dhamian, Kartar Singh of Domeli, Kartar Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, Chhaja Singh of Massanian, Amar Singh of Rajoval, Bachint Singh of Dumunda, Ram Singh of Musara Kalan, Thakar Singh of Bharta, Bhola Singh, and Partap Singh of Chhabilpur joined the hunger-strike.<sup>195</sup> The strike was called off only at the intercession of S. Buta Singh, N.L.C., Panjab. He promised to take up the case for the reform of jails in the Council.<sup>196</sup> Hazara Singh of Munder and Bhola Singh of Dhamian were challaned for this offence and were sentenced to one year's additional term and were transported to the Multan jail. They continued the hunger-strike, there, too. Again, they were shifted to Montgomery jail and their sentence was increased by one year, here as well.<sup>197</sup>

In September, 1926 Bhai Karam Singh of Jhingar, Dalip

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194. Vide the Siyasat, Lahore, May 22, 1926.

195. Bachint Singh and Bhola Singh were accused of the Babbar conspiracy case Supplementary II, while others were of the main Babbar case.

196. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, 31st. July, 1926.

197. Makhsuspuri, F.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.264-65. Also vide Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik(ms), p.473.

Singh of Manak, Hardit Singh of Jassoval and Kartar Singh of Gondpur, etc. went on hunger-strike again in Multan jail as a protest against the maladministration of the jail and ill-treatment of the prisoners. The Babbar's who went on hunger-strike, were 12 in all. After 28 days of hunger strike, Hardit Singh of Jassoval and Dalip Singh of Manak were given the punishment of 30 canes each. Partap Singh, Bhola Singh of Adhkare Kathe (II Supplementary Case) and Sunder Singh were sent to Indoman-Nicobar islands as a measure of coercion.

The account of hunger-strikes is an ample proof of the Babbar dauntlessness. On November 16, 1926 the prominent Babbars like Karam Singh of Jhingar, Kartar Singh of Domeli, Shiv Singh of Haripur, Ujjagar Singh of Bistrampur, Dalip Singh of Manak, Hardit Singh of Jassoval, Man Singh of Gujjaranwala, Kartar Singh of Gondpur, Banta Singh of Daulatpur, Surain Singh of Kangmai, Surain Singh of Daulatpur, Gian Singh of Alowal, Udham Singh of Sura-UN-Nissi and Bhola Singh of Dhamian went on hunger strike.<sup>198</sup> The Babbars were threatened with dire consequences and some of them were even deported to "Kaale-Paani" but nothing could deflect them. The strike was called off only on January 20, 1927 when some of their demands were met.

In 1929, S. Bhagat Singh went on hunger-strike to seek special class for the political prisoners in jails. S. Sunder Singh Makhauspuri, Karam Singh of Jhingar, Kartar Singh of

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198. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangat (ms), pp. 459-60



Gondpur, Thakar Singh of Bharta and Bachint Singh of Dumunda also went on hunger-strike to support his cause. It continued for 3½ months. The Babbars got an addition of one year in their jail term and were transferred to Montgomery jail.<sup>199</sup>

After sometime the Babbars were sent to Multan jail. Here again they had to go on hunger-strike as a protest against the harsh treatment meted out to Harnam Singh Chamak of Ahmedgarh dacoity fame. The Babbars who went on hunger-strike included Bachint Singh of Dumunda, Bhola Singh of Kathe Adhkare, Piara Singh of Dhamian, Hardit Singh of Jassowal, Karam Singh of Jhingar and Thakar Singh of Bharta. This occurred in 1930.<sup>200</sup> The Superintendent of the Multan jail was incorrigible. The jail authorities found a way out only by transferring the Babbars to the Montgomery jail back.

In 1932, again confrontation took place with jail authorities and as a result of this S. Karam Singh of Jhingar and Kartar Singh of Gondpur were sent to Lahore jail, while Bachint Singh of Dumunda and Thakar Singh of Bharta were transferred to the Multan jail, leaving Sunder Singh, Makhsuspuri alone in the Montgomery jail till 1937.<sup>201</sup>

In 1938, the Babbars went on hunger-strike again to affect their release as they had undergone complete term of

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199. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.257.

200. The Arsi, Delhi, November 1982, pp.40-42.  
Also vide Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.286.

201. Ibid., p.287,

imprisonment. Sunder Singh of Makhsuspuri, Sachint<sup>Singh</sup>/of Dumunda and Udham Singh of Sura-un-Nissi continued their strike for 2 months.<sup>202</sup> Karam Singh of Jhingar died on the day of release i.e. on April 8, 1938. S. Sunder Singh was the last to be released in December, 1938.<sup>203</sup>

But no account of the Babbar struggle in jails will be complete without a reference to the indomitable spirit with which Sardar Hazara Singh of Munder escaped by digging a 74 feet long tunnel in the Montgomery jail.<sup>204</sup> His escape from the jail is nothing short of a thriller. How he was able to cut 36 strong iron bars which fettered his legs, staggers imagination! That he managed to perform this feat with the aid of cotton thread and that too within a span of four days, would always remain a mystery. He could be arrested only when he had covered a distance of 45 miles.

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202. Ibid., p.289.

203. Ibid., p.290.

204. Gargaj, Arjan Singh, Mera Apna Aap, op.cit., p.140. The account of the escape varies from writer to writer. Labh Singh, Sankhep Tavarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.148 gives the length of the tunnel 77 feet whereas the Panjab Tribune, May 25, 1983 on the basis of an interview with S. Hazara Singh gives the length of tunnel as 250 feet.

## VIII

### SEQUEL TO THE MOVEMENT

Such feats of indomitable spirit, patriotic fervour and manifold sacrifices of the Babbar Akalis had created an aura of reverence. No doubt, the movement was crippled and it began to fade out but the government had failed to wipe out the Babbar Akalis from existence. The Babbar Akalis continued to operate, for a considerable long time, even after 1927.

The people and the parties were irresistibly drawn towards the Babbar Akalis. They had evoked sympathy from all quarters. The 'Babbar Sher' was the first to appeal to the Central Sikh League' to create a fund to help the families of the Babbar Akalis and raise a memorial, thereof.<sup>1</sup> The Jhabali party organised a diwan at Bolina in memory of the Babbar heroes.<sup>2</sup> The Sikh League appealed for Rs. 1,25,000 for the 'Desh Bhagat Qaidi Parwar Sahaik Fund' in its session on April 3-4, 1926 at Lahore and viewed the Babbar executions

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1. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, March 15, 1926.

2. Home-Political, Proceedings, File No.113/IV/1926. It was a group of the Akalis led by three brothers, namely S. Amar Singh, S. Sarmukh Singh and S. Jaswant Singh of village Jhabal, District Amritsar.

with horrors.<sup>3</sup> The 'Kirti' gave wide publicity to an appeal, for the funds, made by Kartar Singh of Latala, Secretary Desh Bhagat Parwar Sabaik Committee.<sup>4</sup> The 'Akali-Te Pardesi', the 'Kirpan Bahadur' of March 4, 1926, the 'Qaumi Dard' and the 'Zamindar' of March 5, 1926, and the 'Desh Sewak' of March 11, 1926 and various other periodicals not only condemned the government action in executing the Babbar Akalis but also eulogized their selflessness and patriotism.<sup>5</sup> Various Sikh Organisations in Canada and the U.S.A. also adopted resolutions of sympathy. The Canadian and American Press Society generously contributed to the Desh Bhagat Qadi Parwar Sabaik Fund.<sup>6</sup>

In fact the Babbar Movement was charismatic. The contemporaries kept the Babbar torch lit by celebrating 'the Babbar day'. In 1928, Balwant Singh Dukhia of village Bains, Arjan Singh 'Bach' of village Kharaudi and Master Kabul Singh of Gobindpur underwent 3 years' imprisonment for the offence of celebrating the Babbar day.<sup>7</sup> Master Mota Singh, who was released

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3. Loc. cit.

4. The Kirti, Amritsar, July 20, 1926.

5. The Panjab Native Newspaper Report, 1925, pp.113-37.

6. Home-Political Proceedings, File No.200/1926, pp.2 10-11.

7. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.299.

on June 23, 1929, was sore at the short-sighted and weak-kneed policy of the Akalis which added to the Babbar difficulties. He praised the Babbar heroism without reservation.<sup>8</sup> He convened a conference of the Babbars in 1938 in Gurdwara Bandagarh.<sup>9</sup> All the Babbars who had undergone jail terms for the national cause were given 'saropas' there. During 1936-40 a 'Babbar Bahadur Shahidi Bunga' was also built under the supervision of Sant Hari Singh Kaharpuri and the contributions were generally given by the American and Canadian Sikhs.<sup>10</sup>

But the Babbar story will be incomplete if the exploits of the Babbars during late twenties and thirties are not enumerated. They form an important segment of the Babbar saga. Sadhu Singh of Sandhara's exploits are singularly unique and deserve top priority in order of chronology. He was himself involved in the Babbar conspiracy case, supplementary II i.e. crown v/s Nikka Singh and others but he was acquitted in 1927.<sup>11</sup> He was cut to the quick when he learnt that the wife of Surain Singh of Daulatpur, and the widow of Banta Singh of Dhamian<sup>12</sup>

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8. The Babbar Sher, Amritsar, June 28, 1929.

9. The Gurdwara was in Master Mota Singh's village, Patara, vide Interview of Kartar Singh of Pindori Nijjaran to the writer, on 9th September, 1983.

10. Makhauspuri, E.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.314-15. and Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.264.

11. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS.), p.455.

12. He was killed at Munder on 12 December, 1923.



had been kidnapped by Jagat Singh of Kadhiana and Sucha Singh of Sandharwal, respectively. Sadhu Singh felt agonised at the disgraceful acts of depraved men and women. He, with the help of Bishana and Mehnga from Susan, first, murdered Jawala Singh of Kathian, who had falsely implicated him in a case at the instance of Sub-Inspector Aga Khan of Hoshiarpur. Then he decided to do away with the despicable Jagat Singh and others. He said 'ardasa' in a Gurdwara and murdered Jagat Singh, his cousin, a vamp, Banta Singh's widow and Lambardar of the village.<sup>13</sup> He also did away with Sucha Singh of Sandharwal alongwith Banta Singh Dhamian's widow who was living with him. He also murdered a toady captain for his nefarious activities.<sup>14</sup> S. Sadhu Singh of Sandhara was arrested with the connivance of Labh Singh and Bhan Singh of Randhawa Masandan (Jullundur) in complicity with their brother-in-law Bhola Singh of Haripur who lived in Bar area. Labh Singh and Bhan Singh became approvers and divulged the facts about the murders of Jagat Singh, Sucha Singh and others in the court. Sadhu Singh was aware that they did not know about the murder of Jawala Singh Kathian. So, when the evidences in this case were over, he managed to call one Sadhu Singh, who had become a mendicant, and told him about the place where the corpse of Jawala Singh lay buried. He also persuaded him to give evidence to the fact that Labh Singh, Bhan Singh and

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13. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.138-41.

14. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.307.

Sadhu Singh of Sandhara had murdered Jawala Singh. As a result, Labh Singh and Bhan Singh were also implicated in the murder of Jawala Singh and they could not escape as approvers. They, alongwith Sadhu Singh were also sent to the scaffold on May 16, 1931.<sup>15</sup>

Rattan Singh Rakkar's exploits are also notable and deserve special mention. He was inspired by Karam Singh of Daulatpur. He, too, like him, began to collect arms but his efforts were foiled by a toady, named, Sikandar of Mehatpur who got him arrested. He was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment under illicit Arms Act. During the Babbar Akali movement he could not play any part. When he was released he again began to manufacture bombs and also hurled some bombs on the police stations of Garhshankar and Balachaur.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, he was arrested and was sentenced to 20 years' term of imprisonment in 1931. He escaped from police custody, on April 23, 1932 with ten other prisoners, after attacking the escort party in the train at Narwana, a railway station, near Bhatinda.<sup>17</sup> The Head constable, incharge of the police party was killed

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15. Labh Singh, Sankhep Tavarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.144. But Milkha Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, in his interview with the writer on 16th November, 1983 and Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik (MSS), p.350 hold only Bhola Singh responsible for his arrest and do not agree with Labh Singh that Labh Singh and Bhan Singh were his accomplices.

16. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.7.

17. Harbhajan Singh, Bharati Shohidan Dian Lahoo Bhilian Yadan, op.cit., p.86.

on the spot. Then ensued a grim struggle of hide and seek attended with nightmarish experiences. In 11 days after covering a distance of 140 miles he reached his village, Bakkar. To avoid police net he moved from place to place. He was surrounded in Jamalpur village, on April 26, 1932. Then, he took shelter in a Gurdwara near Gurna Station after wounding a person who was chasing him. On May 7, 1932 he was seen near Kum, District Ludhiana.<sup>18</sup> The government announced a reward of Rs. 3,000/- for his arrest,<sup>19</sup> subsequently increased to Rs. 10,000/- and 10 squares of land.<sup>20</sup> The lure of the reward, turned his relatives into police informers. A son-in-law of his paternal aunt, with whom he was staying in Rurki Sainian, now called Rurki Khas, became an informer.<sup>21</sup> He deprived him of the ammunition and also informed the police. A large contingent of policemen besieged the village. He took shelter in the house of Ganda Singh which was immediately put on fire. Rattan Singh exchanged fire. He shot

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18. Nahar Singh, Azadi Dian Leharan, op.cit., p.330.

19. Nijjar, B.C., Panjab under the British Rule, p.132 and

20. Chopra, P.N., Who's who of Indian Martyrs, Delhi, 1973, p.302.

20. The Panjab Tribune, Chandigarh, 1st April, 1982.

21. Vide Home-Political, File No., 48/3/1933, pp.101-102, containing Parsang Rattan Singh Bakkaranwala mentioned that Rattan Singh was betrayed by his friend, Mihan. The account highlights the aim of the Babbar. He tells his sister (an imaginary dialogue) that: 'I have taken up the sword of Dharama ... I did not plunder anybody ... My jatha was doing a righteous deed... I am the brave lion of the Doaba. I will suffer hardships to make the world a happier place to live in.'.

dead three policemen including Head-Constable Abdul Fahim and constables - Bhagat Singh and Udham Singh. One Hazara Singh S/O Attar Singh of the village was also killed.<sup>22</sup> Fattan Singh, himself, was also mortally wounded. Death to the Babbar was more honourable than surrender. He fell a martyr to the cause on 15th July, 1932.<sup>23</sup> Isher Singh, Genda Singh and Pritam Kaur were arrested by the police for the offence of giving shelter to Fattan Singh and they were awarded 3 years' term of imprisonment, each. A punitive fine of Rs. 8000/- was imposed on the villagers. Even the pensions of the pensioners of the villagers were also forfeited.<sup>24</sup>

The memorable development as a sequel to the movement was the ceaseless efforts to do away with the notorious toadies and traitors with perfect acumen and secrecy. Bela Singh of Zian, who had left Vancouvre after murdering and betraying his co-religionists, was hacked to death in his house on December 8, 1933.<sup>25</sup> He was done to death by Hari Singh of Sundh, Sant Inder Singh of Murari and Isher Singh of Jandoli<sup>26</sup> and thus they carried out the decision, taken in a meeting of the Babbar revolutionaries held at Anandpur Sahib in 1932. They escaped by boarding a train to Amritsar from Phagwara. The case was registered against Hari Singh, Ishar Singh and Bakhshish Singh of Chabbewal but for want of an eye-witness, they were acquitted.

22. Nahar Singh, Agadi Dian Leharan, op.cit., p.421.

23. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.308.

24. The Panjab Tribune, Chandigarh, April 1, 1982.

25. The Nawan Zamana, Jullundur, July 27, 1980.

26. The Panjab Tribune, Chandigarh, November 3, 1979-vide an interview of Amar Singh Tegh. Also, vide The Nawan Zamana, Jullundur, July 27, 1980.

A defence committee comprising Arjan Singh 'Sach', Dasaundha Singh, Harnam Singh and Ram Singh 'Jauhar', had fought<sup>27</sup> their case successfully. Thus, by killing a brasen-faced traitor, they were able to settle their scores with the stooges and traitors.

The next to be put to death was Anup Singh of Manko. He was the person who played treachery with the Babbars and got them killed at Babeli on September 1, 1923. In March, 1936, a meeting of the revolutionaries was held at Anandpur Sahib and they took a vow to kill Anup Singh. The meeting, besides others, was attended by Kartar Singh of Chak Bagarian, Ujjagar Singh of Pannahali, Isher Singh of Jandoli, Sant Inder Singh of Murari, Mehar Singh of Kotli Lehal and Bhagat Singh of Lyallpur. Ujjagar Singh was asked to accomplish the deed. He took, Kartar Singh of Chak Bagarian and Gurdit Singh of Mandhali, alongwith him. It was Kartar Singh of Domeli who had incited them to murder the wretch.<sup>28</sup> They shot Anup Singh and his son dead on June 21, 1936 in his house.<sup>29</sup> The police were able to trace the murders and succeeded in arresting Gurdit Singh, Kartar Singh and Ujjagar Singh. In this case, Kartar Singh and Gurdit Singh were sentenced to death and sent to the gallows on 10th August, 1938, while Ujjagar Singh was acquitted.

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27. Makhsuspuri, S.F. Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.302.

28. Vide, interview of the writer with Kartar Singh of Pindori Nijran on September 9, 1983.

29. The Nawan Zamana, July 27, 1980. Also vide the Desh Dardi, contd:..



Karam Singh of Mannanbana, who in complicity with Jawala Singh of Zian brother of Bela Singh of Zian, was responsible for the death of valiant Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur was murdered by the two fugitives from Kapurthala army, namely, Bachint of Dhandoli, Tehsil Phagwara and Ajaib Singh of Dakha (Ludhiana). They were prompted by some Babbar sympathiser to murder Karam Singh because he was an eyesore to the Babbars due to his perfidy as well as braggardism. They murdered him on March 25, 1940. He was murdered near the limits of village Kangraur and was thrown into a 'choe' flowing nearby.<sup>30</sup> Later on, they also killed Mula Singh of Plahi (a Babbar case accused no. 71, who had undergone 5 years' imprisonment) for the attempt to get them arrested. Bachint Singh fell a prey, later on, to the machinations of his relatives. His wife and her uncle got him arrested from Pinderi Ganga Singh where he was married. He was awarded death sentence whereas Ajaib Singh could not be arrested. This brave fellow avenged his friend's arrest by murdering Sibbo, Bachint Singh's widow, her uncle Bir Singh and cousin Samund Singh in their village, Lakhpur. Ajaib Singh was, later on, killed in an encounter with the police.

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29 contd:

June 29, 1936. Also see, Labh Singh, Sankhep Tavarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.118. Mussafir, Gurmukh Singh, Vihvin Sadi De Shaheed, op.cit., p.134 is not correct in mentioning that Anup Singh was shot dead by them on June 18, 1930.

30. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tavarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.76.

The stray murders of some of the other toadies were also committed during this period. Sikandar of Mehatpur was killed in December, 1942 by a Babbar.<sup>31</sup> It was he who had created difficulties for Rattan Singh of Rakkar. In January, 1943 Ram Singh of Muzara Kalan approver No.12 of the Babbar case was also grievously assaulted as he was vain enough to call himself a Babbar.<sup>32</sup> This happened in the village of Bachauri where he had gone to attend a marriage. He was attacked by Hiranjan Singh and Udham Singh, son and nephew of Dalip Singh of Sadhara. Ralla Singh of Diehkot Manko, responsible for the death of Waryam Singh of Dhugga in Lyallpur was also murdered during this period. Some of the other traitors were also done to death. Kartar Singh Babbar of Pindori Nijjara stated that he killed Ajit Singh Dhada, who was a friend of the family. Ajit Singh Dhada was a police agent. He got Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan arrested and this caused incalculable harm to the movement. Kartar Singh also claimed to have persuaded Karam Singh Mahal, a decoit, to kill Jamadar Gurdit Singh of Burro Barrian. Kartar Singh was an employee of Khaddar Bhandar Centre, Mahalpur, when he got it accomplished. He was ostensibly a Gandhian, but in fact, he pursued the Babbar line zealously.<sup>33</sup>

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31. Ibid., p.118.

32. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit.p.76.

33. Vide interview of S.Kartar Singh of Pindori Nijjara with the writer on 9.9.1983.

The saga of the Babbar heroism and sacrifices will be incomplete without the narration of the Malwa Babbar Akali Jatha which tried to seek vengeance by eliminating the atrocious S.G.M. Beaty and butcherly Sir Michael O'Dwyer, responsible for the excesses during the Guru Ka Bagh morecha and Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, respectively.<sup>34</sup>

Babu Fanta Singh was responsible for organising a group of the Akalis in the Malwa region of the Panjab but his sudden arrest threw cold water on their plans. The first to come into contact with him was S. Kartar Singh of Jaspalon, District Ludhiana.<sup>35</sup> He was an ex-Ghadrite. The Babbars of the Malwa, too, believed in violence and worked actively, transcending group affiliations. They had connection with the Riasti Paria Mandal, the Akali Dal and other revolutionary groups and were in sympathy with all those who were opposed to the British rule. Their programme included preparation of arms and for this factories were to be opened. They worked in complete secrecy. Each member was asked to bring two more dependable members. None was allowed to ask other's name. The suspected member was to be shot dead, instantaneously. This group started its activities in 1929. The important members of this group were Kartar Singh of Jaspalon, Kartar Singh of Sekha, Wazir Singh of Asarpur,

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34. Nahar Singh, Agadi Dian Lehran, op.cit., p.336.

35. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.983.

Niranjan Singh of Solakhian, Baba Budh Singh of Mangal and Mann Singh of Barri Tibba, District Sangrur. Kartar Singh of Jaspalon was elected Jathedar of the group in a meeting held in the Gurdwara of village Sekha in 1930.<sup>36</sup> Mann Singh Barri demonstrated his skill of manufacturing bombs, etc. Soon, they started manufacturing arms in the factories set up in the villages of Bugra, Rabbon, Kudhani and Ghaloti where they, also, held meetings to discuss the future course and action.<sup>37</sup> In one of the meetings, Sahib Singh Salana and Chaudhri Sherjang of Ahmedgarh dacoity fame, too, had taken part,<sup>38</sup> despite the fact they were connected with the Naujawan Bharat Sabha.<sup>39</sup>

While the Babbars were busy in their programme, Charan Singh Kakar, Harman Singh Chamak, Chaudhari Sher Jang and Sahib Singh of Salana Committed a dacoity at Ahmedgarh Station on October 15, 1929 and tried, unsuccessfully, to loot the government treasury being carried in the train.<sup>40</sup> They were immediately arrested. The Babbars planned to secure their release. Wasir Singh of Asarpur and Niranjan Singh of Solakhian were sent to bring Bhajan Singh driver from Mangeval in this connection, but they were arrested by a force of the Payal Police station.

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36. Ibid., p.1001.

37. Nahar Singh, Asadi Dian Leharan, op.cit., p.336.

38. Wasakha Singh Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., pp.983 and 1012. The author asserts that Babbar Mann Singh of Barri disclosed this in his statement that Sahib Singh of Salana and Chaudhri Sher Jang had actually participated in a meeting at Sekha.

39. Ibid., p.1013. Sahib Singh Salana stated this in his interview with Sant Wasakha Singh.

40. Govt.of India, Terrorism in India, op.cit., p.77.

Kartar Singh of Jaspalon, on sensing that their plan had gone awry, at once removed the arms from the factories where these were being manufactured. Master Kartar Singh of Sekha was arrested. Kartar Singh of Jaspalon and Mann Singh of Barri absconded. The Panjab Government announced a reward of Rs. 1100/- and a square of land for the apprehension of Kartar Singh Jaspalon whereas a reward of Rs. 1000/- and 700/- was proclaimed for Mann Singh Barri's arrest by Ludhiana and Patiala authorities respectively.<sup>41</sup>

Thus it deflected their whole programme. Mann Singh of Barri was pursued by the police in the villages of Alipur, Mallo Majra, Dhadegal, Begowal, Mangal (near Dehlon) and Maherna. He, ultimately, left for Nanded<sup>42</sup> to escape from the police witch-hunt. Kartar Singh of Jaspalon also left for Bikaner. Mann Singh came back in 1934 and was arrested at Khadial, near Badhlahda.

This group did not produce any tangible results, but its underground activities brought another group into being which included Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal, Bhola Singh of Loha Khara, Fazla of Ghumanwala. Santa Singh of Barri Tibba, Ghuman Singh Mistri, Sawan Singh of Tibba and Udham Singh of Sunam.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.1002.

<sup>42</sup>. Ibid., p.984.

<sup>43</sup>. Nahar Singh, Asadi Dian Lebran, op.cit., p.336 and Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.985.



The party in one of its meetings assigned duties to murder the enemies of the 'Panth' and the country. Udham Singh of Sunam was entrusted with the task of murdering O'Dwyer.<sup>44</sup> His brother Mukta Singh nee Sadhu Singh was killed at Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919. Since then, the fire of revenge had burnt within him. He went to the U.S.A. in 1924 but returned to India soon and was arrested and put in prison on August 30, 1927. Three pistols and 400 cartridges were recovered from him. He was imprisoned for 5 years. After his release he came into contact with the Babbars and the members of Yug Paltao Dal of Amar Singh Tegg and Arjan Singh Gargaj. This party was carrying out the programme of murdering the toadies. He met them on 17th May, 1932 in Sri Nagar and the programme to murder O'Dwyer was once again considered.<sup>45</sup> Udham Singh left immediately for London on a fictitious passport. He waited there for more than 6 years. It was on March 13, 1940 when Sir Michael O'Dwyer who was taking part in a discussion on Afghanistan at Caxton Hall, London, was shot dead. He was sentenced to death on 13th June, 1940 but was sent to the gallows on July 31, 1940. He thus, avenged the national insult. His action owed inspiration to the Babbars and various other groups which indirectly owed their genesis to the Babbar Akali movement.<sup>46</sup>

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44. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Volume III, op.cit., p.985  
It was not General Dyer but Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who was to be his target. Dyer had died already on July 23, 1926. Wasakha Singh seems to be confused about the identity of the General and the Governor.

45. The Panjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, Nov.3, 1979.

46. Bhajan Singh, Saade Shahid, p.315. and Wasakha Singh

contd...

When Udham Singh was entrusted with the task of murdering O'Dwyer, Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal, Bhola Singh and Fazala were directed to murder S.G.M. Beaty. Their programme misfired due to the arrest of Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal after an encounter with a police party of Malerkotla headed by Atta-Ulla-Khan. In jail he came into contact with Kundha Singh of Ghasiana and Bachan Singh of Loha Khera. They showed interest in his programme of murdering S.G.M. Beaty and they readily agreed to do whatever they could to accomplish it. They managed to escape from jail. Soon they were joined by Bhola Singh of Loha Khera, Fazla of Ghumanwala and Kaka of Chatha Sekhwan. They met Sant Ujjagar Singh of Hero Kalan, District Bhatinda who advised them to do away with the tyrant.<sup>47</sup>

S.G.M. Beaty lived at his farm in Chatha Sekhwan<sup>48</sup>. He was paramour of a beautiful woman of loose character named Harnami. She had poisoned her husband Sucha Singh and thus got rid of him. Her brother-in-law Kaka was incensed at her deeds. She lived with Mr. Beaty as his keep.

The decision to reform Mr. Beaty was arrived at on the persuasion of Sant Ujjagar Singh who arranged police uniforms for them. All except Kaka donned the uniforms. Kundha Singh became Sub-Inspector while Bhola Singh and Bachan Singh dressed themselves as Head Constables. All others wore the uniforms of

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46 contd:

Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.997. Also vide Satya, M.Rai Panjabi Heroic Tradition, op.cit., p.149 and Sachitar Kaumi Ekta, Delhi, August, 1983.

47. Vide the Hoka, May-June, 1975, Mansa, p.25.

48. Chatha-Sekhwan is near Sunamata distance of 4 miles only. It is also called Chatha Opali. Chatha and Opali are two separate villages.

the police constables.<sup>49</sup>

Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal thought of a clever device. He handcuffed Kaka and took him to Beatty's farm. They drubbed Kaka as a culprit. They brought him before Beatty who was sitting in a chair and asked him to seek his mercy. Kaka fell on Beatty's feet, caught hold of his legs and knocked him down. Their ruse had worked. They immediately murdered him in the broadday light on May 27, 1940,<sup>50</sup> and thus avenged Guru Ka Bagh atrocities.<sup>51</sup>

The murder was immediately reported to the Thapedar of Sunam, Munsha Singh Ahluwalia and Superintendent of Police S. Bhagwan Singh. Kaka's brother, Bachan Singh, was arrested by the police who had no connection with the murder.

Kunda Singh of Ghaziana, Fazla of Ghumanwala and Kaka of Chatha Sekhwan were killed in an encounter with the police. Bachan Singh of Loha Khera<sup>52</sup> was arrested, tried and sent to the scaffold.<sup>53</sup> Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal and Bhola Singh of

49. The Hoka, op.cit., p.25.

50. Ibid., p.27. It is a strange coincidence that the two of the most cruel British officers, who terrorised the Panjabis and insulted the Sikhs, met their end at the hands of the Babbars of Malwa in 1940.

51. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Itihaas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.988. Also vide, Gopal Singh, Dr., A History of the Sikh People, op.cit., p.656. Also see The Hoka, May-June, 1975, Mansa, p.24.

52. Loha Khera is near Longowal, District Sangrur. Dr. Kamlesh Mohan in her Ph.D.Thesis, Militant Nationalism in the Panjab, 1919-35, has confused it with Lohar Khera, District Jullundur.

53. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.206.

Loha Khara were arrested. They were, however, acquitted in this case but were implicated in the cases of robberies and were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Even in the jails of Independent India they were undergoing imprisonment. Patriotism was their crime.<sup>54</sup>

It was due to the intercession of Sardar Partap Singh Kairon that Kartar Singh Chhiniwal was not only released from Ludhiana jail but a pension was also granted to him.<sup>55</sup>

S. Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khura, accused No.84 of the Main Babbar Case tried to organise old Babbars into a "Yug Paltau Dal" during world war II. They assembled in a Gurdwara at Hoshiarpur.<sup>56</sup> Some of them, like Harbans Singh of Sirhala, Ujjagar Singh of Dhamian, Dharam Singh s/o Banta Singh of Dhamian, Bhola Singh, elder brother of Banta Singh, Bhola Singh of Kathe Adhkare, Kartar Singh of Gondpur, Sunder Singh of Makhsuspur, Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjara, Hazara Singh of Munder, Bachint Singh of Dumunda, Ujjagar Singh of Bistrampur, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal, Surain Singh of Daulatpur and Thakar Singh of Bharta had suffered imprisonment during the

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54. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Itiha, Vol.III, op.cit., p.989.

55. The Hoka, May-June, 1975, Mansa, p.28.

56. Vide Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(MSS), p. 502.

Babbar Akali Movement.<sup>57</sup> There were new members also, who joined the ranks of Yug Paltau Dal. They included Shamsheer Singh of Moranwali, Nirmal Singh of Sarinh, Baba Ganda Singh of Sirhala Kalan, Waryam Singh of Sarinh, Chhaja Singh of Khairra Majha (Kapurthala) and Ram Singh of Raipur Bal (Jullundur).<sup>58</sup> Some of the Sikh soldiers of Jhansi Regiment had also deserted. Thirty five of them were arrested, while Labh Singh of Aklota (Una), Sadhu Singh of Manak Dheri (Hoshiarpur) and Arjan Singh of Dholanwala (Hoshiarpur) successfully escaped and joined the Yug Paltau Dal.<sup>59</sup>

On the third day after the Diwali in 1940, Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad, Master Ujjagar Singh of Dhamian, Piara Singh of Dhamian, Bhola Singh of Kathe Adhkare, Nirmal Singh of Sarinh, Baba Ganda Singh Singh, Sadhu Singh of Manak Dheri, Labh Singh of Aklota, Dharam Singh of Dhamian and Ujjagar Singh assembled at Kiratpur and decided to do away with a toady, Mela Singh pujari.<sup>60</sup> He, however, escaped unhurt while his servant was killed.<sup>61</sup> The party, then, proceeded to Jassowal and

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57. Loc.cit., Also vide, Buta Singh, Babbar Akal Tehrik (MSS.), p.364. Milkha Singh includes Sunder Singh Makhsuspuri and Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran in the group. But neither Sunder Singh mentioned it in his book, Babbar Akali Lehar nor Buta Singh lent any weight to it. Buta Singh told the present writer in an interview on 20.11.82 that he was approached by Harbans Singh of Sirhala but his ideas had changed then. Bachint Singh Dumunda had also declined to join 'the Yug Paltau Dal'.

58. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS.), p.502.

59. Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik (MSS.), p.382.

60. Ibid., p.364.

61. Loc.cit.



stayed with Harbakhash Singh. The case was registered against Harbans Singh, Ujjagar Singh of Dhamian, Genda Singh, Nirmal Singh of Sarinh and Shamsheer Singh of Moranwali. Others escaped but Shamsheer Singh was arrested from his village. He knew nothing about this murder. Despite his innocence he was sentenced to death and executed.

In March, 1941, Harbans Singh, Ujjagar Singh, Nirmal Singh and Master Ram Singh met Uddham Singh of Nagoke and Sohan Singh of Jalal-Usmanan and decided to bring out "Yug Palta Akhbar". With their encouragement, they started its publication in April, 1941.<sup>62</sup> Arjan Singh, Sadhu Singh, Labh Singh, Chhaja Singh and Waryam Singh were attacked by the people near Bhogpur when they had gone 'to reform' a toady. Chhaja Singh was killed in the skirmish.<sup>63</sup>

In September, 1941, Bhola Singh of Katha Adhkare was arrested from Bhang Chiri, District Ferozepur. He confessed his involvement in the Kiratpur murder and Kalka shooting. The incharge of this case was Sayyad Ahmad Shah who had been previously the incharge of the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II. It was he who prevailed upon him to make a confession. As a result, C.I.D. was able to conclude that Yug Paltau Dal and Meerut Kirti Party were accomplices. In December, 1941 a meeting of

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62. Ibid., p.377.

63. Ibid., p.380.

the top-ranking officers took place and immediate crackdown, upon the members of the Dal, was decided. Sant Parkash Singh of Alawalpur, who was S.P. of Lyallpur, sent a message to the Babbars through Amar Singh of Dosanjh to escape from the Majha. While Labh Singh, Arjan Singh and Sadhu Singh and three army fugitives made good their escape, others like Harbans Singh, Nirmal Singh and Genda Singh remained in the Majha. C.I.D. was able to enter their inner circle through Tara Singh of Pangota.<sup>64</sup> On January 10, 1943, they were arrested from Jama Rai, District Lahore, through Tara Singh's perfidy.<sup>65</sup> On June 20, 1943, the police was also able to arrest Nazar Singh of Pheruman from Darbar Sahib, Taran Taran. Ram Singh, a disciple of Sant Hari Singh Kaharpuri was also arrested from Bhagtanwala railway station, while he was going to Amritsar from Tarntaran. Piara Singh of Dhamian was arrested from Gurdwara Baba Ker Sahib (West Panjab) and was interned in Lyallpur under Defence of India Act. Ujjagar Singh of Dhamian was killed in an encounter with the police.

Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad<sup>66</sup>, Genda Baba/Singh of Sirhala Kalan and Nirmal Singh of Sarinh (Jullundur) were tried for their involvement in Kiratpur murder case by the Sessions

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64. Ibid., pp.381-85.

65. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.264.

66. Harbans Singh was the Manager of Gurdwara Committee, Kiratpur.

Judge of Hoshiarpur who sentenced Harbans Singh to death while others were acquitted.<sup>67</sup> Harbans Singh was sent to the gallows on April 3, 1944 in Ludhiana jail after his appeal was rejected by the High Court. It was a befitting epilogue to the revolutionary movement started by the Babbar Akalis. The Babbars, soon after, murdered Tara Singh of Pangota as well.

The contention, that the Babbars of the Forties carried the tradition of the Babbar Akalis of Twenties, has been corroborated in a poem written by S. Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad himself. The insignia of the Babbars during the latter period was a ferocious 'Lion' (Babbar Sher). In the poem, the Babbar was exhorted to unfurl the National Flag high and he was asked to terrify the Feringhee. In the poem, the Babbar was urged to extirpate the toadies, as under:-

Babbar Shera, uth Dalera  
 Khauf Feringhee Tain Panda ja.  
 Jhul jhul oe Kaumi Jhande,  
 Jhul Jhul Shan Wadhanda ja.  
 Jholichuk Lumbar Gidder,  
 Chun Chun Mar Mukanda ji.<sup>68</sup>

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67. Nirmal Singh Sarin and Baba Genda Singh were acquitted. Nirmal Singh was killed on March 9, 1947 alongwith Babu Labh Singh in Jullundur when a mob, incited by the Muslim League, attacked them.

68. Sarbadi, Kartar Singh, Singh Sabha Lehar Da Sunehri Te Mahan Purupkari Ithas, Yamuna Nagar, 1974, p.470.

Thus their motives and means during the entire period were the same. They aimed to overthrow the British rules by violent means and almost all the notorious toadies, who helped the Britishers in their designs, were exterminated by them. No doubt the movement faded in the end but it left a proud record of selfless sacrifices of which any community can feel proud of.

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## IX

COLLAPSE OF THE MOVEMENT

The Babbar Akali Movement had shaken the foundation of the British administration in the Punjab and its tremor was felt even in the British Parliament. The Panjab administration regarded the movement as a conflict between criminal elements and the forces of law and order.<sup>1</sup> It failed to perceive its political character. The Babbars aimed at subverting the British rule in India by spreading disaffection and bringing about a revolution. The people were incited against the government and the loyalists were terrorised to such an extent that they were gradually withdrawing their support to it.<sup>2</sup> The Panjab Government, though not complacent, realised the gravity of the situation and immediately deployed troops to crush the movement. Though the movement became popular in the Doaba yet it was obliterated within a couple of years.

There were several factors that led to its collapse but organisational weakness was the foremost of them. The movement was not the result of a well-thought-out plan. Though

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1. Home-Political Proceedings ,File No.134/II/123,p.75.

2. Paper Book Babar Akali conspiracy case,p.842.



it was inspired by the speeches of Master Mota Singh yet he<sup>3</sup> was nothing more than an adviser. No doubt his heart lay with the Babbar Akalis but he confined himself to deliver inciting speeches alone. He was arrested in June 1922, when the Babbar Jatha had not been even formally launched. Jathdar Kishan Singh Gargaj, who was the spirit and soul of the movement, was an ex-soldier. He was Secretary of the Akali Dal from April, 1921 to June 1921. After the failure of the plan to murder the officials responsible for the Nankana Carnage, he became a fugitive from justice and formed the 'Chakravarti Jatha' in November, 1921.<sup>4</sup> This Jatha continued to work separately till S. Kishan Singh came into contact with S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur. Both the Jathas merged and adopted the nomenclature of 'Babbar'. Kishan Singh was elected its president. S. Karam Singh 'Editor' was appointed member of the executive committee. Master Dalip Singh of Gussal and Karam Singh of Jhinger were secretaries. It was strange that three of the four top-leaders were arrested in January-February, 1923, at a time, when the Babbar Akalis had emerged as a force to reckon with. The relatives and confidants had begun to play havoc with the Babbar Akali movement.

The inclusion of those, in the inner circle, who were once tried and found unreliable such as Amar Singh of Kot Barra

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3. Sadhu Singh, Master Mota Singh Ji, Jiwani, op.cit., p.43.

4. Babbar Akali case, Judgement, 1925, p.2.

Khan, Sant Kartar Singh and new entrants like Anup Singh delivered the movement a catastrophic blow and showed the utter organisational weakness of the movement. The greatest defect in the organisation lay in its non-democratic character. The leaders paid little heed to the warnings of its members.<sup>5</sup> Though Kishan Singh was warned about Kabul Singh; Karam Singh about Anup Singh; Santa Singh about the activities of Sant Kartar Singh and Dhanna Singh about Jawala Singh but none of them paid any heed to these warnings. Probably, they failed to realise the veracity of the age old dictum that to be fore-warned is to be fore-armed. What a price they had to pay for brushing aside the timely warnings! The greatest harm came to the movement from the insiders. The story of the betrayals is too sordid to be narrated in full. The props and pillars of the movement fell with the first touch as if moth-eaten. Sant Kartar Singh was the person on whom Jathedar Kishan Singh depended the most. It was he who helped Kishan Singh to take refuge at Mastuana in June, 1921. But the same person became a double-dealer in March, 1922 after his arrest warrants under section 201 I.P.C. were issued. He got an assurance of the withdrawal of the warrants if he helped in getting the top-leaders arrested. But he could not do so. On June 27, 1922 he was again arrested

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5. Buta Singh, one of the Babbar veterans, referred to this in his interview with the writer on 20.11.1982.

and was imprisoned for one year by the Magistrate Mr. Abdul Fatta. Again he was let off on the promise of helping the arrest of the Babbars.<sup>6</sup> Since then, his conduct became perfidious. He tried to get Kishan Singh arrested on January 24, 1923 while he lay asleep in Bela Singh Pragpuri's Haveli.<sup>7</sup> He is alleged to have confessed that he would not be able to withstand the third degree methods of the police. But Kishan Singh laughed off at it.<sup>8</sup> It never occurred to him that he would stoop too low to save himself from the police. It is a fact that Sant Kartar Singh had once expressed openly his desire to get Kishan Singh arrested and receive the award himself.<sup>9</sup> Again he, in league with the police, got Babu Santa Singh arrested from Tapa railway station on June 20, 1923. Babu Santa Singh, though warned by Maluk Singh of Plahi that it was in the air that Sant Kartar Singh was in liaison with C.I.D., turned a deaf ear to the warning. He expressed the view that the people had been talking about him since long and asserted that even if he was in league with C.I.D., he would not play treachery with him.<sup>10</sup> He was also responsible for the arrest of Assa Singh

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6. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., pp.13-14.

7. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.110-111.

8. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh (MSS.), Ch.1. He mentioned it on the authority of S. Balwant Singh, nephew of Joginder Singh Khuradpur who was a relative and a close associated of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj.

9. Paper Book - Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, p.62.

10. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.214-16.

of Phakradi from Kiratpur. Gurbachan Singh alleged that Sant Kartar Singh did it for the sake of Rs. 250 only. In fact, he had become an informer and an agent of the police. Such men were snakes in the sleeve.<sup>11</sup> Again, Kishan Singh Gargaj could not see through the game of the so-called sympathisers under his very nose. Bhan Singh of Birring had acted as an agent of the government, during the Budge Budge incident and by way of reward was made the Police Sub Inspector. He had left service now. Having won Kishan Singh's confidence he again carried on his nefarious activities. He, once, saved Maulavi Qumur-ud-Din from the wrath of the Babbars. Qumay-Ud-Din was a C.I.D. official who lived near Birring. He was ostensibly planted there to spy on Kishan Singh. Bhan Singh brought Quran from Dakoha and asked the Maulvi to swear by it. It was a gimmick to throw dust in the eyes of Babbars to allay their fears. Later on, Bhan Singh made Kabul Singh of Birring, his accomplice. Kabul Singh not only won the confidence of Kishan Singh but also convinced him of the miraculous powers of the Maulvi. On 25th February, 1923 Kishan Singh was taken to Masit (Mosque) Khaki Shah, a desolate and secluded place between Pindori Mahal and Dhadda Fateh Singh. Kabul Singh and his father-in-law Labh Singh of Dhadda, Maulvi Qumar-ud-Din and Bhan Singh laid

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11. Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.26.

the trap so artfully that Kishan Singh was arrested on 26th February, 1923 in the early hours.<sup>12</sup>

An other insider was Anup Singh. He was arrested for keeping 3 feet long kirpan and was convicted on 23th June, 1922. He was released on 27th January, 1923.<sup>13</sup> He became<sup>14</sup> a member of the Babbar Jatha in March, 1923. He was one of those seven members who announced their names for the reformation of Halla and Dittu of Kaulgarh in a leaflet on May 17, 1923.<sup>15</sup> S. Karam Singh was warned by Dhanna Singh about Anup Singh but the former paid no heed to it.<sup>16</sup> As a result, Babeli carnage took place on September 1, 1923, in which four Babbars were killed including Karam Singh who was the leader of the movement, then. With his death the Babbar movement became leaderless and rudderless.

In the beginning of the year 1923 Karam Singh of Jhingar and Master Dalip Singh of Gossal were got arrested by Karam Singh's brother Kehar Singh. When blood relations play false what one can expect of others! Dhanna Singh Behbalpuri's

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12. The Panjabi Tribune, Jullundur, February 23, 1982 (vide an article by Sukhdev Singh of Birring).

13. Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy, p.145, Makhsuspuri. Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lahar, op.cit. p.121 is not correct when he writes that Anup Singh was released in March, 1923.

14. Sant Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.1039 and Gurbachan Singh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.51.

15. Home-Political -File No.134/II/1923, p.8.

16. Vide interview with Inder Singh Kirti on 20th December, 1982. Also vide interview of the writer with Kartar Singh Babbar of Pindori Nijjaran.



confidant Jawala Singh first got arrested Dalip Singh of Dhamian and later on got Dhanna Singh arrested at Mannanahana. Waryam Singh of Dhugga, last of the Babbar stalwarts also fell a prey to the treachery of his maternal uncle Dalel Singh and his son-in-law at Chak No.54. Thus all the leaders were either got arrested or killed by the betrayal and treachery of their relatives, confidants and insiders in whom they confided. It is paradoxical and ironical that the organisation which could flourish only secretly, was knocked out of its base by those who knew their secrets. The blame must rest on the leaders who failed to judge their confidants and followers. But then, human beings must confide in some one. Only the most faithful would have had the constant access - required to carry out the mission and these were the men who proved most dangerous.

The organisation was rendered in-effective by the inability of the members to remain secretive. The Panjab C.I.D. did not have much difficulty in infiltrating their inner circle.<sup>17</sup> It was Sadhu Singh, a C.I.D. agent, who wormed into the 'Akali' office at Lahore and won the confidence of the extremists like Bijla Singh of Gharuan and smashed the bid to murder the government officials after Nankana tragedy. Again, overwhelming number of the Babbars turning approvers

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17. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.205.

and near relatives appearing as witnesses and colleagues levelling allegations did no credit to the Babbar Akalis.<sup>18</sup>

A large number of the witnesses in the Babbar Akali Case amply prove this contention to the hilt. Ranjit Singh alias Ajit Singh of Dhada Kalan, who was responsible for the arrest of Amar Singh Kot Barre Khan (then a resident of Kot Fatuhi) narrated how he succeeded in getting himself enlisted in the Jatha on the recommendation of Kartar Singh S/O Dewa Singh Canadian of Pindori Nijjaran. Ajit Singh and Kartar Singh's uncle, Munsha Singh, were well-acquainted with each other because they lived together in Canada. Ajit Singh became the member of the Jatha and passed on the information about the Babbars to Mir Fazal Imam, D.S.P, C.I.D.<sup>19</sup> posted at Jullundur.

The Babbar Akali movement lacked that unity and cohesion which was necessary for its success. There were differences among the Babbars about the strategy and operational techniques. Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, a close associate of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, disclosed that differences of Kishan Singh Gargaj and Babu Santa <sup>Singh</sup> / <sup>the</sup> remained till/last.<sup>20</sup> The

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18. Paper Book Babbar Akali conspiracy case, p.185.

19. Vide Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, p.377.

20. Vide Buta Singh, Babbar Akali Tehrik, p.114(MSE)

differences of Karan Singh Daulatpur and Kishan Singh Gargaj first surfaced in December 1922. When Hari Singh Jallundari was writing article after article in the 'Akali-Te-Pardesi' against the Babbar Akalis, Kishan Singh Gargaj invited Hari Singh through the pages of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' to sort out the differences as both were well-wishers of the 'Panth'. When the leaders of the Babbar Jatha were going from Jassowal to Mehargarwal, Karan Singh on the instigation of Babu Santa questioned the decision of Kishan Singh of inviting Hari Singh without consulting him as he was the de jure editor of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba'. Karan Singh was satisfied only when Kishan Singh clarified that he did so in the capacity of the leader of the Jatha. This incident showed that there was lack of confidence among the Babbars. It also showed that there was lack of unity among them so vital for the democratic bodies.<sup>21</sup> It has been alleged that in January 1923, even Dhanna Singh Behbalpuri, who was top-ranking leader of the Babbars, was hobnobbing with the police to get Kishan Singh and other Babbar Akalis arrested to seek pardon<sup>22</sup> for himself. Fortunately, the scheme fell through. Though the allegation might be untrue, yet the spreading of such rumours was fatal to the solidity of the movement.

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21. Loc.cit.

22. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, (statement of Kabul Singh Sub Inspector, Police District Ambala as well as Statement of Kartar Singh S/O Jawala Singh Barro Barrian who alongwith Jawala Singh of Zian contacted Sub-Inspector Kabul Singh then at Mahal Pur to seek pardon for Dhanna Singh, p.68).

Assa Singh of Phakrudi never sincerely followed the line given by the Babbar leadership. He dissented with Karam Singh. Again he was very critical about Kishan Singh. His derogatory and uncomplimentary remarks about the latter exposed his inner self. Kishan Singh's maternal uncle Bhagwan Singh Zaildar of Haripur and his cousin Gajja Singh,<sup>23</sup> who appeared as witnesses against Kishan Singh did little credit to the leader whose relatives were supporters of the police.<sup>24</sup> The confessional statements of important leaders were also detrimental to the success of the movement. These confessions resulting out of timidity, pride, repentance, despair or inexperience caused the movement an in-calculable harm.<sup>25</sup> Twenty two of the Babbar Akalis turned approvers and this put the movement in doldrums. The confessional statement of Babu Santa Singh and long statement of Kishan Singh Gargaj further weakened the movement.<sup>26</sup> With these cracks the movement crashed. Even Rattan Singh of Rakkar was put in the police net by the avarice of his paternal aunt's son-in-law.<sup>27</sup>

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23. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case - pp.298,371,102 and Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangarsh(Mss),p.200.

24. Paper Book, Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, pp.220-21.

25. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.,p.225.

26. Vide interview of Kartar Singh and Bakhsish Singh of Pindori Nijjaran on 9.9.1983.

27 The Punjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, April 1, 1982.

The might of the British Empire was too great for the Babbars to withstand the police onslaught. They were no match for a government which had limitless resources in men, money, material and arms. The Babbars had neither weapons nor money nor could they look for assistance to any native state while the government had troops and guns.<sup>28</sup> The hold of the government on Zamindars, Lambardars and Safedposhs hindered the cooperation of the people with the Babbars. In some cases, the people of the villages even chased the Babbars and helped the police. Kishan Singh had a narrow escape while his two companions Arjan Singh and Sunder Singh were arrested at Sundh on 11 May, 1923. The lure of big rewards turned many a weakling into traitors. Banta Singh of Dhamian was chased by the villagers of Nandachaur. In this struggle he killed a mendicant, a Rajput boy and cut off the arms of another youngman of Chamarari leading to his death. He escaped the mob narrowly and it was with great difficulty that he reached his village.<sup>29</sup>

The coercive and repressive policy of the government, too, broke the back-bone of the movement. Indiscriminate arrests unparalleled atrocities on innocent Akalis and their relatives crippled the movement. Since November, 1922 the Panjab Government took strong measures to crush the movement. It announced rewards to affect arrest of the Babbar Akalis on November 30, 1922; April 25, 1923 and finally on 8th August, 1923. A special staff

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28. Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, p.219.

29. Labh Singh, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., 84-89.



under Khan Sahib Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Superintendent of Police, C.I.D. Panjab, was appointed to deal with the movement. It conducted raids in 39 villages which were considered strongholds of the Babbars.<sup>30</sup>

The Babbar Akali Jatha was declared an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. Units of Cavalry and infantry were stationed at strategic points and the joint force of military and special police started operations against those members who had taken shelter in the Siwalik Hills.<sup>31</sup> Bi-weekly flights of aeroplanes scattering propaganda leaflets have had a reassuring effect on the loyal population.<sup>32</sup>

The government followed a policy of repression so brutally that indiscriminate arrests were made and innocent persons who had no connection with the Babbar Akali movement were also hauled up. It showed not only hostility but also arrested or threatened to arrest the members of the Enquiry Committees appointed by the Indian National Congress and the S.G.P.C. to enquire into the Doaba excesses. Maulvi Lal Hussain, on behalf of the Provincial Congress Committee, conducted an enquiry into the Doaba killing and police excesses. He brought to light such facts which made hair stand on an end.<sup>33</sup>

No.

30. Hom. Political File/200/1926, pp. 7-8.

31. Home-Political, File No. 134/11/1923, pp. 9, 52-53.

32. Ibid., p. 39.

33. The Akali-Te-Pardesi, June 9, 1923.

After that every effort to enquire into the police excesses had to face opposition of the government. Even the proposed visit of Mr. T.A.K. Sherwani of Aligarh to Jullundur was viewed suspiciously and to prevent his entry, the seditious Meetings Acts was considered.<sup>34</sup> The S.G.P.C., too, was not allowed to investigate.. It sent the first enquiry committee on 7th July and the second on 6th September, 1923. The members of the last one were arrested on 11th September, 1923.<sup>35</sup> The atrocities, to which the arrested persons were subjected by the police, were inhuman. The statement of Chhaja Singh s/o Mihan Singh of Massanian refers to the third degree methods used by the police. He says: "My hands were used to be put on stones under the legs of the bed. Buta Ram used to sit on the top of the bed and catch hold of my 'Keshas' and Shah Hakim Singh, Thanedar, used to fist and kick me. They also threatened that Huqqa water would be put unless I signed the statement."<sup>36</sup> This was not a solitary case.

There was no end to police excesses. It crushed the movement by surrounding the Babbars at Babeli on September 1, 1923; at Mannanhana on 25th October and at Munder on December 12, 1923. By that time the Babbar leaders were either had been arrested or

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34. Home-Political, File No.134/II/1923, p.15, letter No.8350-SB from Mr. H.D. Craik, Chief Secretary to the Government of Panjab to J. Creyar, Secretary to Government of India, 5th June, 1923.

35. Ibid., pp.92-93.

36. Paper Boock, Babbar Akali Conspiracy Case, p.993.

were killed in the fake encounters. The Punitive Police Posts were set up in the villages and cumulative fines were imposed to terrorise the people of the Doab. It used the press and propaganda to denounce the Babbar by spreading lies and branding them dacoits.<sup>37</sup> The court witnesses in certain cases were dacoits and had nothing to do with the Babbar Akalis.<sup>38</sup> But the government was bent on maligning them and to certain extent it succeeded in weaning away the general public from the Babbar Akalis. This led to the situation in which the Babbar were not given any quarter and there started a race of the traitors to snatch the first possible opportunity to betray the patriots.

Again, the Babbar were handicapped by the paucity of resources. They had to resort to robberies to get money to purchase weapons. They were certainly no more successful than the Ghadrites in securing arms.<sup>39</sup> In the third week of December 1922, they failed to purchase 150 pistols simply for want of Rs. 7500/- and for this they even failed to borrow money from well-off contractors like Brahma Singh Sandham who were their sympathisers.<sup>40</sup> As a result they had to resort to dacoities and robberies at Jadia, Jansar and Dhogri railway stations and many other places. These affairs brought them less

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37. Makhsuspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., pp.251-52.

38. Home Political Proceedings, File No.134/2/1923, pp.92-93.

39. Khushwant Singh, A History of the Sikhs, Vol.II, op.cit., p.205.

40. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.95.

money and more notoriety.

Another snag in the movement was its regional character. It did not cut much ice outside the Doaba. The Babbar Jatha was an isolated one with very limited base and was broken by the government repression.<sup>41</sup> Though individual and sporadic actions took place here and there, before and after the executions of 1926 and 1927, yet it failed to gather momentum as a mass movement. A movement to be effective must be wide in its operation and deep in its intensity. Its leaders like Master Mota Singh, Jathedar Kishan Singh and S. Karam Singh belonged to the Doaba and it was there that they succeeded to any extent. The arrest of the first two delivered a deadly blow to the movement. This led Karam Singh and others to resort to plunder and murder. Mr. Bull, Committing Judge, observed on April 17, 1924, that the conspiracy of murder and plunder collapsed as it was begun before time.<sup>42</sup> The Babbar leaders possessed all the peculiarities of the Punjabi character. They planned hastily and failed to consider the pros and cons. The volcanic eruption of the movement was immature. With the high spirited and adventurous Sikhs, the interval between thought and action is short.<sup>43</sup> This observation, of Indian Sedition Committee, was equally applicable to the Babbars.

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41. Harbans Singh, The Heritage of the Sikhs, New Delhi, 1983, p.279.

42. The Akali, April 10, 1924.

43. Indian Sedition Committee Report, 1918, p.161.

The Malwa region of the Panjab remained oblivious of its operations though it was at Mastuana that Kishan Singh launched first salvo against the foreign rulers. The number of the participants in the movement outside the Doaba was very insignificant and that too came through army. Army personnel helped in an individual capacity. Neither the army nor the peasantry, as a whole, was involved in the movement. The regional character is evident from the Babbar Akali case in which except 15 participants all belonged to Hoshiarpur and Jullundur Districts. While 10 belonged to Kapurthala State, one each belonged to Ludhiana, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Amritsar.<sup>44</sup> These figures don't materially change, if we take into account the involvement of all the persons who participated in the movement. The movement remained confined to one particular region. Teja Singh of Bhuchar gave a false hope of resurrection in the Majha and Bijla Singh in the Malwa, but none raised a finger when the time came.<sup>45</sup> With the arrest of some of its leaders and the death of others in the encounters with the police, the enthusiasm of the people melted away.

With the government repression, the Babbars failed to get new converts. This led to the thinning of the Babbar ranks. Such movements can succeed only if they are well-entrenched in the masses. The Babbar Akali movement definitely was devoid of

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44. The Babbar Akali Case Judgement, 1925, p.141.

45. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.35.



mass character. It was the Akali Movement which really kindled the spirit of the masses. As Babbars were a group of the Akalis wedded to the policy of violence, they were under the illusion that the people all over the Panjab would support them. This was not so and this could not be. Even the Akali Dal and the S.C.P.C. did not acclaim them openly. The movement remained confined to the ex-soldiers who hailed mainly from the Doaba. Even whole of the Doaba - its Hindu and Muslim population - did not support it. The movement remained confined mainly to Jat Sikhs and that also to the Akalis. It was surprising that none from the upper middle classes and educated sections of the people actively participated in the movement. It was confined to rural areas alone. Dr. Kamlesh Mohan on the authority of Dr. Hari Singh of Bebbalpur stated that they distrusted the educated classes. The fact, on the other hand, is that the movement failed to evoke any active response from the well-off educated classes.

The movement also suffered heavily when it adopted one point programme of murders of the toadies. This action was doomed to failure and no step was taken to keep it secret. Sometimes, the Babbars themselves advertised whenever a jholichuck was murdered.<sup>46</sup> It was strange secret organisation, advertising its activities and bringing it to the notice of the government. They seem to have little knowledge of either the nature or

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<sup>File No.</sup>  
46. Home Political, 134/2/1923, p.55. Also vide Paper Book Babbar Conspiracy Case, p.767.

modus operandi of secret bodies. They also lacked any training in the guerrilla methods of warfare.<sup>47</sup> Peace-Councils came into conflict with the Babbars. It was at Sangowal diwan in 1922 that the Babbars felt compelled to give a tilt to their programme. Since then the reform of the iholichuks received priority. Now, the movement drifted into a programme of murders and dacoities. The programme of murders brought notoriety to the movement. All the relatives of the toadies were not pro-government. But the murders of the toadies antagonised their relatives too. This deprived the Babbars of their sympathy.<sup>48</sup>

The measures of the Panjab Government to isolate the Babbar Akalis decidedly contributed to its failure. The S.G.P.C. and the Indian National Congress as well as the Sikh League were all opposed to the Babbar policy of violence. As there was little distinction between the Akalis and the Babbars in their uniform, daily regimen and aims, the government in the beginning failed to make any distinction. But later on, it succeeded in separating the Akalis from the Babbar Akalis. The Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. were prevailed upon to issue appeals and pass resolutions, warning the Sikh masses to keep aloof from the Babbar Akalis. In November 1922,

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47. Dr. Kamlesh Mohan, Militant Nationalism in the Panjab p.81.(Ph.D. Thesis - Gura Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1978).

48. Phul, Gurdial Singh, Choe Aje Nahin Eukka, Amritsar, 1932, p.45.

S.G.P.C. and the Shiromani Akali Dal warned the Akali Jathas to eschew violence.<sup>49</sup> Again, in its Declaration No.494, dated April 24, 1923, it issued appeal to the people to beware of the literature which preached violence and advised their misguided brethern to remain peaceful and non-violent according to the tradition of the Khalsa.<sup>50</sup> Thus the S.G.P.C. entirely dissociated itself from the Babbars and firmly reiterated that Akalis did not hold forth the Babbars as fine heroes.<sup>51</sup> Again, on May 29-30, 1923, the S.G.P.C. once again warned the Sikhs to keep themselves aloof from those who advocated violence. Even the Akali-Te-Pardesi criticised the Babbar Akalis in its various issues.<sup>52</sup> The Sikh league too did not lag behind.<sup>53</sup> The native states, especially Patiala Darbar was the foremost in curbing the Babbars. It actually helped to arrest some of the Babbars. Some were won over while others were influenced through power and pelf. It tried to influence Master Mota Singh, persuading him to confine his activities exclusively to religious work.<sup>54</sup> Through its trusted agents it also continued to influence him with a view to preventing him from breaking into violence. Whether it succeeded or not, it certainly created misgiving among the Akalis and that also

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49. Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit.p.257.

50. Loc.cit.

51. The Tribune, Lahore, September 27, 1923. Also vide Akali Leader's conspiracy case, from 8.11.1923 to 18.6.1926, p.747(Mss.) and pp.2946.47(printed), statement of S.B.Mehtab Singh.

52. The Akali-Te-Pardesi, July 7, and Sept.15, 1923.

53. The Khalsa Advocate, June 29, 1923.

54. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement op.cit., p.182.

proved harmful to the movement.<sup>55</sup> Even, later on, Master Mota Singh was approached through Sir, Daya Kishen Kaul to issue a statement against the Babbar Akalis though he squarely rejected the move.<sup>56</sup> Patiala Darbar also won over Bijla Singh, who participated in the First Akali Conspiracy. He surrendered himself to Patiala Darbar and his whole party was brought under complete control.<sup>57</sup> This step secured the Malwa and the Sikh states against the Babbar outburst. Even Bhai Kishan Singh was approached. He was interviewed by Bhai Ram Singh in Jullundur Jail and Patiala Darbar claimed to have secured from him the promise of disclosure of the facts of the Babbar Akali movement.<sup>58</sup>

The spreading of such reports certainly harmed the movement, irrespective of the falsity of the reports or otherwise. Again it was through the efforts of Patiala men that Babu Santa Singh was arrested at Tapa railway station on June 20, 1923.<sup>59</sup> Patiala Darbar helped the Imperial interests in rounding up the Babbar gang, besides keeping 8.5 lakhs of the Sikh population of the Phulkian States under control and preventing them from harbouring or sheltering the Babbars, a practice which was, then, very common because of every Sikh feeling duty bound to do so.<sup>60</sup>

By October 12, 1923 it had broken the bone of the Babbar

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55. Loc.cit.

56. Partap Singh, Akali Lehar De Mahan Neta, Amritsar, 1976.

57. Ganda Singh, Some Confidential Papers of the Akali Movement, op.cit., p.182.

58. Loc cit.

59. Ibid., p.193.

60. Ibid., p.184.

By October 12, 1923, it had broken the bone of the Babbar Akali movement. Some were killed and others were put behind the bars. The S.G.P.C., which had deprecated the Babbar activities, was also not spared.<sup>61</sup> Like the Babbar Jatha, the S.G.P.C. and the Shiromani Akali Dal were also declared unlawful associations and 59 of its members were arrested on October 13, 1923. The second batch of 62 members of the S.G.P.C. was arrested on January 7, 1924. The third batch of the Akalis arrested on October 1, 1924, included 5 members of the S.G.P.C.<sup>62</sup> The moderate leaders who remained outside the jail controlled the S.G.P.C. and were under the influence of the government. It is strange that at the time of the decision of the Babbar Trial No. II on February 28, 1925 there were about 33 members of the S.G.P.C. who were being tried U/S 121 whereas the Babbars were being tried U/S 120. The Government in its anxiety to curb the Babbars and to create dissatisfaction put conditions for the release of the prisoners. The long struggle had wearied many among the moderates. On January 21, 1926 two members of Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh group - Risaldar Sunder Singh and Hanjodh Singh accepted conditional release. On 25th January, 1926 Bawa Harkishan Singh, too, accepted the conditions to secure his release. Had the Akalis remained united, it would have resulted in the release of all, including the Babbar Akalis. Bhai Kishan Singh sensed the danger and

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61. Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit. p.286.

62. Ibid., p.286. Ganda Singh, Some confidential papers of the Akali Movement, op.cit., pp.28-31.



sent Labh Singh Jassowal who conveyed Kishan Singh's message penetrating the cell to Hari Singh Jullunduri but 19 out of 33 members of the S.C.P.C. had already got conditional release. This put the government on a strong footing and it dealt with the Babbars in the most barbaric manner.<sup>63</sup> The Babbar Akali movement failed to achieve its goal because it faced a colossus. The antipathy of the Indian National Congress and the S.C.P.C. as well as the opposition of the native states helped curb the Babbar movement. Besides these extraneous factors, its local character, failure to keep secrecy, avariciousness of the compatriots and paucity of the funds leading to dacoities and murders also did incalculable harm to the movement. No doubt, the Babbars had great excitement but lack of resources, poor planning and organisational weaknesses foredoomed its failure.<sup>64</sup>

It is fundamentally true that violence can not appeal to the masses for a long time. Its utility as a measure of an exigency is there but it can not bring success if it becomes single-point programme. Extremism and violence are born out of frustration. It can succeed only if it has the tacit backing of the majority of the people. In the case of the Babbars it had not. The policy of murders, certainly, put the movement off

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63. Labh Singh, Jassowal, Sikhan Dian Be-Misal Qurbanian (Bahaduri-i-Sikhan) (MSS), p.31.

64. Sarwari, P.D., The History of Struggle for Indian Independence, op.cit., p.79.

the track and unnecessarily, increased the enemies of the movement. The movement failed as the entire programme was less practical and more sentimental.<sup>65</sup>

But it must be remembered that no movement is a total failure. The Babbar Akali Movement also became a significant part of the under-currents of the national struggle for Independence of India and had its impact to a considerable extent on the contemporary and subsequent movements.

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65. The Preet Lari, Preet Nagar, August, 1980.

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IMPACT OF THE MOVEMENT

As already stated, no movement is a total failure. Either the movement undergoes a metamorphosis or its prominent actors join such other movements which help them realise their objectives. The same is true of the Babbar Akali Movement. Though the movement was short-lived, yet its impact is legendary. It left a deep imprint not only on the contemporary politics but also on the successive movements. The effect of the movement has permeated into the political, social and literary climate of this region in recent times.

Its impact on Sikh politics is of far-reaching consequences and has come to stay. It was the sacrifice of the Babbar Akalis on the altar of freedom that compelled the British Government to come to terms with the Shiromini Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in 1923 and 1925. In November 1922 Guru Ka Bagh Morcha was over but the problem had not been solved yet, because there were 5600 Sikhs in the jails and the Government was in a fix what to do. Mr. Dunnet, D.C. Amritsar was very much worried, so he contacted some professors of Khalsa College, Amritsar including S. Miranjan Singh, S. Teja Singh and Bawa Harkishan Singh. He said, "I am faced with a serious problem, you know, the Babbar Akalis - they are danger to you, they are danger to us. If you come out with fairly strong denunciation in your interest,

denunciation of the Babbar Akalis, it will help the Government to find out way for releasing 5000 prisoners." The round - about denunciation of the Babbar Akalis and exhortation to the Babbars to come round to the right path on April 24, 1923 by the S.G.P.C. cleared the impasse.<sup>1</sup> Next day the Government released 5000 prisoners. While it took stern measures against the Babbar Akalis, it freed all other Akali prisoners. Ostensibly it was done in appreciation of their efforts to restore Hindu-Muslim amity in Amritsar but actually it was used as a device to extricate itself from the difficult situation which the Government faced at that time. The Babbar Akali movement was a challenge to the Panjab Government. Its activities increased the bargaining power of the S.G.P.C. vis-a-vis the Panjab Government. As most of the radical Akalis were in jails, the moderate S.G.P.C. leadership was persuaded to pass resolutions, condemning the Babbar Akalis. This gave a green signal to the Government and it went ahead with its programme of executing 6 Babbar Akalis and sentencing others for long terms of imprisonment.<sup>2</sup> The Akali Dal and the S.G.P.C. had

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1. Master Tara Singh, Meri Yaad, Amritsar, 1945, p.64, Also vide Bawa Harkishan Singh, Reminiscences of the Akali Movement recorded by Dr. Kirpal Singh, Panjab University and reproduced in Ajit English Weekly, May 21-27, 1983. Also vide, SGPC declaration No.49 Quoted in Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, p.257.

2. The Babbar Sher, June 28, 1929. Also vide Home Department, File No.130/1930, p.12.

also been declared unlawful but the moderates arrived at some compromise with the Government. The conditional release was not acceptable to some of the Sikhs in jails including Baba Kharak Singh, Master Tara Singh, S. Teja Singh Samundari and S. Sohan Singh Josh. They wanted that all the prisoners including the Babbar Akalis be released. This truncated compromise also led to the internecine struggle within the Akali party. The radicals blamed Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh party for the Babbar plight and ultimately they came to control the S.G.P.C. and the Akali Dal, ousting the moderates.

The role of the Babbar movement was sincerely appreciated by the Sikhs in foreign lands. They considered it as an extension of the Ghadr movement and contributed open-heartedly for the welfare of the Babbar families. In May, 1926 Giani Harnam Singh of Khalsa Diwan Society, Vancouver, issued a poster announcing an Akbad Path from May 21-23, 1926 in memory of the Babbar Akalis eulogizing their exploits and expressing sympathy with their families and collecting subscriptions for their relief.<sup>3</sup> De Patrie gave an extract of the poster which highlighted the atrocities of the bureaucracy on the Babbar Akalis.<sup>4</sup> A letter of Giani Harnam Singh of May 23, 1926, praised Bhai

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3. Home-Political, File No.200/1926, pp.1-6.

4. Ibid., p.10.



Kishan Singh in approbrious terms<sup>5</sup>, whereas Samund Singh of the Khalsa Diwan Victoria (British Columbia), condemned bureaucracy for its repression of the Babbar Akalis in a letter written on April 15, 1926.<sup>6</sup> The Secretary of the Pacific coast Khalsa Diwan Stockton, S. Ajmer Singh also delivered a warning to the toadies in a resolution.<sup>7</sup> The Babbar sacrifices according to them, were for the national cause. The Sikhs, in America, sent Rs. 37,000 for the relief of the Babbar families.<sup>8</sup> The movement had influenced the Sikhs everywhere, transcending national frontiers. It gave many uneasy moments to the C.I.D. and the government of Panjab. Three letters by Giani Harnam Singh were addressed to Baba Gurdit Singh of Komagata Maru fame, the 'Desh Sewak' and the 'Babbar Sher'. These were, however, intercepted by the C.I.D. in August, 1926. The activities of the Khalsa Diwan Society Victoria (British Columbia) and the Canadian Doaba Press Society, were considered the beginning of the 'new Babbar Akali Cult'.<sup>9</sup>

The Babbar Akali Movement had terrified the government officials to such an extent that they went on arresting even

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5. The Arsi, February 1979, pp.38-39. Also vide Home-Political File No.200/1926, p.10.

6. Loc.Cit.

7. Loc.Cit.

8. The Panjab Press Abstract, Vol.XXIV, Sept. 29, 1923, p.507.

9. Home-Political, File No.200/1926, p.12.

the innocent Akalis, much later, even after the fizzling out of the movement. C.I.D. shadowed even Bhai Partap Singh, Balwant Singh, Giani Ram Singh Judge, Ram Singh Jauhar and many others. It appeared that the tale-carriers had created scare of the rebirth of the Babbar Akali movement.<sup>10</sup>

It also had its impact on all the radical groups and revolutionaries of the later period. It led to the intensification of the revolutionary activities in the Panjab. The Babbar ideals of selflessness, patriotism and rare heroic sacrifices influenced Bhagat Singh as well. His companion Shiv Verma had recorded that Bhagat Singh always grew emotional while he narrated the saga of the Babbars. It gave him a severe shock when he found that people were celebrating Holi on the 27th February, 1926 with frolic and fun - the day when six Babbars were sent to the gallows. He chided his countrymen for their sheer ignorance and callous indifference. He eulogised the Babbar Akalis in his article - "Blood Stains on the day of Holi" - in the Milap, published from Kanpur on March 15, 1926. He spoke highly of their organisation and modus operandi. He himself, was, in fact, a product of the Babbar movement.<sup>11</sup> It may be futile to understand his revolutionary activities without considering the impact of the Babbar Akali movement upon him. Gulab Singh, himself a revolutionary of note, remarked that the immortal spirit

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10. The Panjab Darpan, Amritsar, August 20, 1927.

11. Ajit Singh, Punjabi Suba, op.cit., p.63.

lofty idealism and exuberant enthusiasm of the Babbar Akalis had overwhelmingly left an imprint on the patriots and the movement doubtlessly produced the prince among them, S. Bhagat Singh.<sup>12</sup>

The failure of the movement taught a lesson to the later revolutionaries. The murders of the toadies had so much claimed the attention of the Babbar Akalis that it put them off the track. Bhagat Singh and his comrades, therefore, rightly aimed at the British rather than at the toadies. The impact of the movement was manifest in the native states as well. The role of the Babbar Akali movement in the genesis of the Riasti Parja Mandal has also been acknowledged.<sup>13</sup> Again, an offshoot of the Babbar Akali movement sprouted in the Malwa due to the efforts of Babu Santa Singh. Though it failed to make much headway, yet it influenced Kartar Singh of Jaspalon and Mann Singh of Barri who further influenced Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal and others. Even Udham Singh of Sunam is said to have come into their contact. Their meetings often took place in Bugra, Ghalote, Kudhani and Sekha.<sup>14</sup> Kartar Singh of Jaspalon and Mann Singh of Barri tried to launch the movement

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12. Gulab Singh, Under the Shadow of Gallows, Delhi, 1963, p.35.

13. Singal, D.P., Panjabi Kavita Da Vikas, Ludhiana, 1970, p.190.

14. Harbhajan Singh, Shahidan Dian Lahu Bhijian Yaddan, op.cit., p.122.

in the cis-Sutlej states. Though their efforts proved abortive, yet their impact on Kartar Singh of Chhiniwal and others was very consequential. They avenged Guru Ka Bagh atrocities by murdering S.G.M. Beatty at his farm in Chatha Sekhwan, near Sunam, in 1940.<sup>15</sup>

Udham Singh, too, was inflamed by the Babbar heroism. It exercised enormous spell on various other groups, too. One such group was, 'Yug Paltan Dal', organised by Amar Singh Tegh, Arjan Singh Gargaj and Sant Inder Singh of Murari, with its headquarters at Singh Bela, Amritsar.<sup>16</sup> According to Amar Singh Tegh, they were at Sri Nagar when Udham came out of jail after undergoing 5 years' term of imprisonment and met them in Kashmir in the guise of a mendicant. It was there on May 17, 1932 that a programme to murder O'Dwyer was chalked out.<sup>17</sup> The fire of revenge burnt within him. He left for England. It was there that he shot Sir, Michael O'Dwyer dead in Caxton Hall, London on March 13, 1940,<sup>18</sup> and thus he displayed the Babbar determination to exterminate the enemies of his religion and the country.

Again, it was the Babbar impact on the youngmen which propelled them to do away with the toadies and approvers. No movement exercised its spell in a like manner, on the contemporary youth. It is creditable that during the thirties many a traitor

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15. Nahar Singh, Agadi Dian Leharan, op.cit., p.339, writes that Beatty was murdered in 1937-38. But Sarwan Singh Bir, the Hoka, June, 1975., Mansa, p.27 gives the correct date of his murder as May 27, 1940.

16. The Panjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, Nov. 3, 1979, vide Interview of S. Amar Singh Tegh by Harbhajan Halwarvi.

17. Loc.cit. Here Amar Singh has mentioned Dyer which is due to confusion. In fact, it was Sir, Michael O' Dyer.

18. Bhajan Singh, Sade Shaheed, op.cit., p.315.

was put to death. If ever a movement haunted the toadies, the Babbar Akali Movement was one.<sup>19</sup> The Babbar heroism left a deep trail and some youngmen took upon themselves the task of avenging the Babbar deaths brought about by the traitors. In this series the murder of Bela Singh of Zian took place on December 8, 1933. He had fled from Vancouver after murdering and betraying his countrymen and co-religionists. Hari Singh of Sundh, Sant Inder Singh of Murari, and Isher Singh of Jandoli murdered him.<sup>20</sup> The case was registered against Hari Singh, Isher Singh and Bakhshish Singh of Chabbewal but due to insufficient evidence, the accused were acquitted.<sup>21</sup> Anup Singh of Nanke, who played treachery at Babeli on September 1, 1923 was also shot dead in his house alongwith his son by Gurdit Singh of Mandiali, Kartar Singh of Chak Bagarian and Ujjagar Singh of Pannahli on June 21, 1936.<sup>22</sup> A meeting at Anandpur Sahib was held in March, 1936 in which Bhagat Singh of Lyallpur, Kartar Singh of Chak Bagrian, Ujjagar Singh of Pannahli, Ishar Singh of Jandoli, Sant Inder Singh of Murari and Mehar Singh Musafir of Kotli

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19. Gargaj, Arjan Singh, Do Pair Ghat Turna, Delhi, n/d, p.26

20. The Panjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, November 3, 1979, Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.263 is not correct in stating that he was murdered by Gurdit Singh, Hari Singh, Kartar Singh of Chak Bagrian and Shiv Singh of Chabbewal.

21. Makhauspuri, S.S., Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.302,

22. Labh Singh Jassowal, Sankhep Jawarikh, Babbar Akali, op.cit., p.118, and the Dash Dardi, Amritsar, June 29, 1936, and Nawan Zamana, Jullundur, July 27, 1980.



Lehal took part. Ujjagar Singh was asked to perform the deed and he alongwith two others killed Anup Singh. The three were sentenced to death, but Ujjagar Singh was acquitted on appeal in the High Court.<sup>23</sup> Kartar Singh of Chak Bagrian and Gurdit Singh were hanged on September 10, 1938.<sup>24</sup>

Karam Singh of Mannanhana was an accomplice of Jawala Singh of Zian, who got arrested Dhanna Singh of Behabalpur on October 25, 1923. He was killed by Bachint Singh of Dhandoli and Ajaib Singh of Dakha - two fugitives from the Kapurthala regiment. They murdered him on March 25, 1940. He was murdered near the limits of village Kangraur and his dead body was thrown into a rivulet. They also killed Mula Singh of Plahi who tried to get them arrested. Bachint Singh was, later on, arrested due to the complicity of his wife and her uncle from Pindori Ganga Singh. Ajaib Singh could not be arrested. He avenged his friend's death by murdering his friend's treacherous wife Sibo and her uncle.<sup>25</sup> Later on, he was also killed in an encounter with the police. Another notorious toady Sikandar of Mehatpur was killed by the Babbars in 1942.<sup>26</sup>

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23. Makhsuspuri, Sunder Singh, Babbar Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.303.

24. Bammi, M.S., Indian Martyrs, New Delhi, 1977, p.28.

25. Labh Singh, Sankhep Tawarikh Babbar Akali, op.cit., pp.126-31.

26. Ibid., p.118.

It was again the Babbar impact which impelled Harbans Singh Sirhala to organise "Yug Paltao Dal" in late thirties.<sup>27</sup> This group attempted to murder Mela Singh Pujari of Kiratpur but killed his servant instead. Harbans Singh alongwith Nirmal Singh of Sarinh and Baba Ganda Singh were betrayed by Tara Singh of Pangota on January 10, 1943,<sup>28</sup> and were got arrested from the High School of Jamma Rai. They were tried and as a result Harbans Singh Sirhala was hanged in Ludhiana Jail on April 3, 1944 while others were acquitted.<sup>29</sup> Ralia Singh of Dichkot Manko, responsible for the death of Waryam Singh of Dhugga, and Tara Singh of Pangota were also among the toadies who were killed during this period.<sup>30</sup> Besides, Ajit Singh of Dhadda and Jamadar Gurdit Singh of Burro Barrian were also despatched likewise.

The impact of the Babbar Akali movement is manifest on Sikh politics even today. The Sikhs have always rallied round those who followed the path shown by the Tenth Guru.

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27. Milkha Singh, Babbar Akali Sangharsh (MSS), p.562.

28. Giani Partap Singh, Gurdwara Sudhar Arthat Akali Lehar, op.cit., p.264.

29. Sarhadi, Kartar Singh, Singh Sabha Da Mahan Parupkari Te Sunehri Ithas, Yamuna Nagar, 1947, p.471.

30. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Vol.III, op.cit., p.1021.

The Babbars were more sanguine in the defence of the Sikh symbols, Sikh shrines and Sikh honour than the Akalis and thus have, since then, inspired the Sikh masses. When ever the Sikhs felt inequity, injustice and oppression, instant appeal to the Babbar modus operandi had brought fresh adherence. The nostalgic attachment to the memories of the Babbar exploits has always played an important role in shaping the Sikh consciousness.

The Babbar Akalis used religious fervour for deliberate political action. They created an awakening and it provided the elan vital to the revolutionary political activities. During the British rule, it turned the Panjab into the second most important centre of anti-British activities. It provided a perpetual source of inspiration for future efforts by inching the patriots forward towards the goal of freedom. In the post-independence era the Naxalite upsurge also drew heavily upon the Babbar ethos and psyche. The mood of open confrontation of the Sikhs, first with pseudo-religious organisations like Nirankaris during the seventies, culminating in a clash and then leading to confrontation with the Panjab Government, is reminiscent of the Babbar spirit. The Nirankaris are neither Sikhs nor Hindus though the majority of them are Keshadharis. Their belief in gurudom, mis-interpretation of the holy scriptures and the condemnation of the Sikh rituals resulted in Nirankari-Sikh confrontation.<sup>31</sup> They clashed

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31. The Kauni Rajn-iti, Ludhiana, June 1983.

with the followers of the Damdami Taksal<sup>32</sup> in Gurdaspur District and the bloodiest clash took place at Amritsar on April 13, 1978 on the Baisakhi day in which 13 Sikhs were killed. The subsequent acquittal of the culprits and the Panjab Government's refusal to challenge the acquittals in the court lit the powder keg. The Sikh response was on the Babbar Akali lines. Indeed, the terrorist activity has been the standard Sikh response to the denial of justice.<sup>33</sup> The indiscriminate arrests of the Sikhs of the Damdami Taksal created a situation which compelled them to launch a morcha. The morcha started by the head of the Damdami Taksal on July 19, 1982,<sup>34</sup> was subsequently adopted by the Akali Dal when it launched "Dharam Yudh - morcha" on 4th August, 1982.<sup>35</sup> The genesis, execution and course of the present morcha are analogous to the Gurdwara Reform movement of the twenties and militant streak bears remarkable resemblance with the Babbar Akali movement.

The impact of the Babbar Akali movement on the present

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32. Taksal means mint where coins are minted. Damdami Taksal means a place where Sikhs are taught to lead life on the ideal Sikh model. Its origin is traced to the activities of Bhai Mani Singh at Damdama, District Bhatinda which guided the Sikhs to lead life in an ideal Sikh way.
33. The Illustrated Weekly of India, Bombay, April 10, 1983, p.13.
34. The Kaumi Rajniti, Ludhiana, June 1983, p.47.
35. The Ait English, Jullundur, 4-10 June, 1983.

neo-revival of Sikhism is evident. The Sikh leaders and masses seem to have learnt a lesson from the Babbar Akali movement which could not attain its objective as the government was successful in creating a rift between the two wings of the Sikhs leading to the decimation of the Babbar Akalis. But the zeal with which the Sikhs have responded to the call of the extremists now is an indication that the Sikhs are facing the onslaught unitedly and with singleness of purpose.

The present struggle is a search for Sikh identity-political as well as religious and the contribution of the extremists who draw sustenance from the Babbar Akali movement cannot be under-estimated.

The Babbar Akali movement has left its deep imprint on the Sikh politics. The Babbar sacrifices for the cause of religion, spurred on the Sikhs to undergo sufferings smilingly and carry on the relentless campaign against those who were out to undermine the foundations of their faith. Last of all, it demonstrated the value of the struggle for survival to shake off the lassitude of the masses. It is not without purpose that numerous references have been made to the Babbar Akalis to settle scores with enemies of the faith and bring the rulers to reason in their speeches in divans held at Manji Sahib, Amritsar.<sup>36</sup>

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36. Vide a letter of S. Gurmakh Singh s/o S. Kishan Singh Gargaj, dated January 2, 1983 to the present writer.



There are many who study history not merely as a warning reminder of man's follies and crimes, but also as an encouraging remembrance of generative souls; the past ceases to be a depressing chamber of horrors.<sup>37</sup> While studying the Babbar Akali movement one comes across nightmarish events in which the Babbars demonstrated the meaninglessness of human existence. The question of violence versus non-violence becomes irrelevant at such a juncture. The movement is a constant pointer to those who stand for just order, that they must be ever ready to sacrifice their all. The impact of the movement has become evident in the recurring growth of the militant groups such as Yug Paltao Dal, the Naxalites, the Dal Khalsa and the Babbar Khalsa and their concomitant sacrificial squads. Besides the Akali Dal, there are splinter groups which, no wonder, bear testimony to the legacy of the Babbar Akali Movement. One such group is the Babbar Khalsa - an extremist group of recklessly militant Sikhs. Violence is its credendum. 'Bullets will continue to fly, the guilty will get their deserts', (Goli Chaldi Rahegi, dusht sodhey jaange) is its credo.<sup>38</sup> In its pamphlets, it exhorts the Sikhs to prepare themselves to fight the "government tyranny and to throw away the yoke of slavery". This group owned responsibility for 35 murders of the Nirankaris, since 1981.<sup>39</sup>

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37. Will Durant, The Lesson of History, Bombay, 1970, p.102.

38. The Probe, Delhi, November, 1983.

39. The Tribune, Chandigarh, December 21, 1983.

Another group deeply imbued with the Babbar ideology is Dal Khalsa. It stands for a relentless struggle against the government. The government proclaimed award for the arrest of their leaders but they warned the informers that they would be dealt with, on the lines of the Babbar Akalis.<sup>40</sup> This shows that the Babbar Akali movement has always enthralled the Sikh psyche.

This study is bound to remain incomplete without a perusal of its impact on Panjabi literature. This movement produced a rich galaxy of poets which put new life in the struggle. The poems written by Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj (in the Panch,<sup>41</sup> the Gargaj Akali<sup>42</sup> and the Babbar Akali Doaba,<sup>43</sup> Banta Singh Sewak<sup>44</sup>, Waryam Singh of Dhugga and Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur,<sup>45</sup> Santa Singh<sup>46</sup> and Mand Singh of Ghural<sup>47</sup> are fine pieces of selfless patriotic fervour. The Babbar heroism has

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40. The Panjabi Trib-une, Chandigarh, May 4, 1982.

41. The Panch, Lahore, December 7, 1921.

42. The Gargaj Akali, Amritsar, February 28, April 17, June 26 and July 31, 1922.

43. The Babbar Akali Doaba, September 9, 1922.

44. Dharam Paul Singal, Panjabi Kavita da Vikas, op.cit., p.191.

45. The Babbar Goonj, San Francisco, June, 1925, p.5.

46. Wasakha Singh, Malwa Ithas, Volume III, op.cit., pp.1023,35, 37,40,51,54.

47. The Gurmat Missionary, Delhi, April 1982, pp.20-21.

also added to the richness of Panjabi folk literature. The folk song about Banta Singh is cited:-

Banta Singh Babbar Dhamian Da,  
Lak Hanh ke Nadi Tar Jave.<sup>48</sup>

(Unique Babbar Banta Singh Dhamian will seem,  
Girding up his waist and crossing the stream)

During the second half of this century, the influence of the Babbar Akali Movement on literature has become more vivid. In this regard, Harsharan Singh, Gursharan Singh and Gurdial Singh Phul have dramatised the Babbar Sagas of heroic patriotism with precision, force and imagination.<sup>49</sup> Tarlok Singh's attempt<sup>50</sup> in the field of fiction is the first of its kind. The poetry of seventies and eighties also bears clear imprint of this movement. The poetry of protest, anguish and revolt was only a rehearsal of the Babbar sentiments and a legacy of Babbar genre of poetry. Dr. Gureharan Singh<sup>51</sup> had put new life into the dry bones of history and Avtar Jandialvi<sup>52</sup> in his poem succinctly points to the historic role of the movement when he calls it another step connecting Baen to Chankaur:

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48. The Kirti, Amritsar, July 1924, pp.45-46.

49. Harsharan Singh, Parde, Delhi, 1969; Gursharan Singh, Sis Tali Te, Amritsar; and Phul, Gurdial Singh, Chos Aie Nahin Sukha, Amritsar, 1982, support this contention.

50. Tarlok Singh, Babbaran De Vithiya, (Goli Chaldi Gai) Amritsar, 1962.

51. The Panjabi Tribune, Chandigarh, January 26, 1982.

52. The Preet Lari, Preet Nagar, August, 1980.

You may be a rebel or a fugitive,  
Let me participate in your funeral congregation,  
Some one has to show the way,  
By getting his joints dissected;  
Some one has to play heroic deed,  
Of linking the fort of Chamkaur  
To the blood-stained currents of Baen.

Thus, the impact of the Babbar Akali movement on Sikh-politics, Indian freedom Movement as well as on life and literature has been very significant. The movement has become a part of the history of our country.

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## XI

THE SUMMING-UPChapter-wise Sketch of the Babbar Akali Movement

The Babbar Akali Movement was the outcome of the Akali Movement and was directed towards the attainment of India's Independence. It was the by-product of the cumulative effect of the anger of the Sikhs against the British administration. The way in which the Panjab had been snatched from the Sikhs, the Kuka Sikhs were suppressed, Sardar Ajit Singh was deported, inhuman treatment was meted out to the passengers of Kama Gata Maru and the British interfered in the religious affairs of the Sikhs by helping the Mahants and thus blockaded the Gurdwara Reform Movement, was agitating the minds of the Sikhs (Ch.I).

The Nankana tragedy and the atrocities perpetrated during the Guru Ka Bagh morcha on the non-violent Sikhs, aroused the ire of the Sikhs, in particular of those belonging to the Bist Jullundur Doab who came out openly to punish those who, they believed, stood in the way of the Gurdwara Reform movement.(Ch.II).

Their aims and objectives were clear and <sup>ci</sup>specific. In the beginning, they stood for the liberation of the Gurdwaras from the control of the Mahants. They first formed Chakarvarti Jathas and propagated their views among the people.



When the toadies made it difficult for them to operate among the people, they launched the Babbar Akali Jatha in August 1922, brought out Babbar Akali Doaba leaflet and included the elimination of the toadies among their objectives (Ch.III).

They stood for the liberation of the Gurdwaras and the country. To achieve this they resorted to violence and the "reform" or "elimination" of the toadies became their watchword. The peaceful propaganda activities and passive resistance were abandoned in favour of purposeful action which could elicit immediate attention of the authorities (Ch. IV).

In order to implement it, they toured the Doab villages, held divans and delivered fiery speeches in the conferences and awakened the masses. But the toadies became a constant source of danger. As a result, they merged their roving groups into BABBAR JATHA to chastise the toadies effectively.(Ch.V).

The Babbar Akalis planned to tackle the toadies first. The first in the series was the assassination of Zaildar Bishan Singh of Rani Thua (Ranipur Kamboan) to be followed by the murders of Dewan (Singh) of Hayatpur on February 13, 1923; Buta (Singh) Lambardar of Nangal Shamman on February 11, 1923; Labh Singh, C.I.D. Head constable of Garh Shankar on March 19, 1923 and Lambardar Hasara Singh of Behbalpur on

March 27, 1923; Subedar Genda Singh of Ghurial was murdered on 17 April, 1923. Lambardar and Sufedposh Ralla of Kaulgarh and his brother Dittu were killed in their village on May 20, 1923. Another notable murder of this period was that of Patwari Ata Mohammed of Mandachaur on June 6, 1923. According to the official record, the number of murders, during the movement amounted to 147. (Ch. VI).

The government, too, tried to nip the movement in the bud by arresting their leading light, Master Mota Singh on June 16, 1922 and other luminaries like Master Dalip Singh of Gossal, Secretary of the Babbar Akali Jatha and Karam Singh Jhingar and Havildar Kishan Singh, the Prima Donna of the Babbar Akali movement.

The arrest of weaklings like Assa Singh of Phakrudī, on March 1, 1923 and that of Amar Singh of Kot Barre Khan on March 26, 1923 enabled the police to make a dent in the Babbar citadel and they obtained many important clues from them. Many villages were raided on March 23, 1923 and on the basis of those raids, arrests of the Babbar Akalis and their sympathisers were started on April 22, 1923 under the direct control of Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Special Superintendent of Police (C.I.D.), Panjab, who was made the overall incharge to deal with the situation created by the BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT. Rewards were proclaimed on April 25 and August 8, 1923, on the lines of the proclamation of November 30, 1922 for the

apprehension of the Babbar Akalis. As a result, many a weakling turned traitor and played in the hands of the bureaucracy to knock the movement out of its bottom.

Babu Santa Singh, the then Secretary was got arrested by his confident Sant Kartar Singh on June 20, 1923 at Tapa railway station from the railway compartment of the train going from Barnala to Bhatinda.

Anup Singh of Man<sup>K</sup>o, also betrayed S. Karam Singh of Daulatpur, the then President of the Babbar Akali Jatha on September 1, 1923 at Babeli, leading to his death alongwith Udey Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian, Bishan Singh of Mangat and Mohinder Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh. Similarly Dalipa of Dhamian was arrested on 12th October, 1923 at Mian Channan railway station (District Montgomery) due to the betrayal of Jawala Singh of Zian. Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur, too, fell a victim to the machinations of Jawala Singh on October 25, 1923. The remanent members of the Babbar Akali Jatha were Banta Singh of Dhamian, Jawala Singh of Fatehpur Kothi and Waryam Singh of Dhugga and a handful of others. Jagat Singh of Munder informed the police that Banta Singh, Jawala Singh and Waryam Singh were staying in his house at Munder. They were besieged on December 12, 1923 at Munder. Waryam Singh alone could escape. He, however, was killed on April 8, 1924 with the connivance of his relatives in an encounter with the police in Lyallpur District.

Those who were arrested were committed to the Sessions. The Main Babbar case and Supplementary case I (known as Trial No.II) included 91 Babbars who were sent for the trial. Three of them died during the trial, while others were convicted out of whom six were hanged on February 27, 1926. In the Babbar Supplementary case II (Trial No.3) again 6 Babbars were sent to the gallows on February 27, 1927 (Ch. VII).

The Babbar activities did not however, come to an end in spite of such deterrent punishments and executions. The Babbars killed many traitors and toadies during the thirties and forties with a vengeance. They included Bela Singh of Zian, Karam Singh of Mannanhana and Anup Singh of Manko. They also murdered the notorious Akali baiter S.G.M. Beatty in 1940 to avenge the atrocities committed by him during the Guru Ka Bagh morcha. The efforts of Sardar Harbans Singh of Sirhala, leading to the organisation of the Yug-Paltan-Dal in order to realise the dreams of the Babbars, were the last in the series (Ch.VIII).

Despite those gigantic efforts and sacrifices, the movement, as ill-luck would have it, failed to achieve its laudable objectives. It failed because it was not masterly planned nor was it faultlessly executed. It suffered from many snags. It remained regional throughout and could make headway only in the Doab. Only a very limited number of people in

the Panjab exhibited any genuine sympathy and open support for it. The reasons were quite obvious. The non-Sikh population altogether kept aloof. Out of the Sikhs their main organizations like Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Shiromani Akali Dal and the Central Sikh League did not extend their open support to it. Even the army, which brought forward no fewer than 54 soldiers to promote its objectives, failed to act as a body. No doubt, sporadic efforts and individual sacrifice created much terror and lent the tempo to the freedom struggle, but that alone was not sufficient.

In order to project it as a forceful and successful movement, cool-headed planning, complete secrecy, through<sup>o</sup> and masterly implementation of the programme were the need of the hour. The Babbars were no doubt, a dedicated and devoted group of men, and proceeded to execute their programme without getting any active and open support from their compatriots. They lived on an emotional plane and executed their plans likewise. They planned to overthrow the British Government in India by the use of arms which they did not possess to any significant extent. The unlimited resources of the then mightiest empire in the world foretold the failure of the isolated efforts and single-handed struggle of the Babbar Akalis (Ch.IX).



But success is not the sole criterion for the appraisal of a movement. The main issue is not the victory but the fight, the essential is not to have won but to have fought well. The spirit that inspires and sustains a movement is an important factor that brings out its character and strength. The strength of the Babbar Akali movement lay in kindling the spark and revivifying the will to liberate the country. The ideology of the Babbars and their selflessness made such an impact on the minds of the countrymen that it became a legend in its own time. Nearly all the revolutionaries in the thirties and forties got direct inspiration from them. The murders of the toadies at the hands of the revolutionaries was the legacy of this movement. Sir, Michael O'Dwyer was shot to death and Mr. S.G.M. Beaty was murdered during this period, and it demonstrated that the cause for which the Babbars fought and died, was not forgotten.

The Babbars rightly considered that an unjust political order could be fought against effectively only by the revolutionary means. They did not see any incompatibility to the use of force to strike terror in the minds of the British officers and their Indian supporters. No doubt, the Sikh religion puts more emphasis on forgiveness and self-abasement but that is an ideal and everything is not permeated with the ideal in life. Even Guru Gobind Singh had advocated the use of force and the Babbars, like true disciples of the Guru,

re enacted his deeds. They firmly held the view that the cruel must be dealt with an iron hand and the toadies must be taught a lesson. Doubtlessly, their struggle was based on moral premises. When there was only "a choice between cowardice and violence", they followed the violent course and died for the cause of the Sikh religion and the country. Their movement was, characteristically, a Sikh Movement in its ideology, logistics and operation. Wherever the Sikhs either felt let down or were convinced of the inequity and injustice, their hand went to the hilt. The movement drew inspiration from the past and also inspired the future events. It became a model for the Post-Independence movements such as Naxalite upsurge in the Panjab in the sixties and the neo-revival of the Sikhs during the seventies and eighties. The struggle spearheaded by Dandami Taksal and the Babbar Khalsa has close resemblance to the Babbar Akali movement and quite interestingly has assumed the same religio-political complexion (Ch. X).

This resume, inevitably, leads us to certain conclusions. The pertinent question arises: Why do such violent movements arise? The answer is quite clear: The urge for emancipation is natural. The rulers, intoxicated with power, prefer to ignore even the genuine aspirations of their subjects and try to suppress them ruthlessly. The coercive methods lead to a situation where confrontation and retaliation become inevitable. If the government resorts to dialogue

instead, much violence can be avoided. Any government worth the name must take steps to redress the genuine grievances. Otherwise, very critical and inflammable situation arises if the government adopts a procrastinating attitude or shows antipathy. In the case of the Babbar Akalis, it was Nankana carnage which gave a severe jolt to the sincere Akalis. In the beginning, the Akalis stood for reformation in the management of the Gurdwaras. The failure of the government to understand the Sikh point of view and the promptness to help the Mahants inflamed the situation. What followed was merely its repercussion.

Secondly, no amount of repression can decimate the longing for freedom. That Babbars could challenge the might of the rulers in this unequal struggle, though for a short period, was characteristic of their dauntless courage and firm determination. They embarked upon the dangerous course, without caring for the consequences. To them, human existence had no meaning and they quite certainly, were aware that the road to freedom lay over the corpses of the patriots. Nothing is achieved without sacrifices.

Thirdly, it brings in bold relief that when fired with an ideal, human beings have an amazing capacity to bear untold sufferings. Only those who are capable of limitless sacrifices are capable of rising to limitless heights.

Fourthly, it brings out the truth that nothing is meaningless. The Babbar Akali movement, in its brief phase,

has left a lesson for posterity. The Babbar heroes had posed such a grim challenge to the government that the government was left with no alternative but to come to terms with the Akalis. It is needless to say that this movement added to the strength of the Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and thus increased their bargaining power.

Fifthly, the movement has yet another lesson which should not be lost sight of. Whenever there is a split, the antagonists take advantage of it and try to break the bone of the movement. This creates a catastrophic situation and the protagonists and proponents fail to fully realise their objectives.

Lastly, the controversy over means is only an exercise in futility. The number of deaths of those Akalis who followed the policy of passive resistance was not less than those of the Babbar Akalis. Violence is a part of human survival and existence and its utility had been recognised. The dangerous situation arises only when it becomes the sole arbiter of human destiny. Its expedient application cannot be under-estimated. It was the death-defying courage and selfless sacrifices of the Babbar Akalis which helped the Akali Dal and the Indian National Congress to strengthen their ranks and realise their aims to a large extent. Their struggle did help bring the

goal of freedom nearer. Thus their contribution to the struggle for freedom has been unique and memorable and hence should find a place of pride not only in the annals of the Panjab but also that of the entire sub-continent of India.

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APPENDIX ICHRONOLOGY OF THE MAIN EVENTS

October 12, 1920	Golden Temple and Akal Takhat come under the control of the Akalis.
November 16, 1920	The S.G.P.C. comes into existence.
December 14, 1920	The Shiromani Akali Dal formed.
January 25, 1921	The Akalis, under Teja Singh of Bhuchar take control of Darbar Sahib, Tarntaran.
February 20, 1921	Tragedy of Nankana occurs.
February 21, 1921	Karam Singh of Daulatpur organises a political conference at Mehatpur.
	- Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib come under Panthic control.
March 3, 1921	Mahatma Gandhi attends a Shahidi diwan at Nankana Sahib and calls upon the Sikhs to adopt non-cooperation.
March 9 to 11, 1921	Master Mota Singh condemns Nankana Carnage and lashes at the policy of non-violence, at Kot Patuhi
March 18, 1921	The Akali conference at Rurka Kalan is held. Master Mota Singh addresses the conference.
March 21, 1921	Karam Singh Daulatpur organises a conference at Mahalpur.
March 25-27, 1921	XIII Sikh Education Conference takes place at Hoshiarpur.
	- The militant Akalis hatch a conspiracy to murder the officials responsible for the Nankana carnage.
April 4, 1921	Kishan Singh Gargaj becomes Secretary, Akali Dal.
April 9, 1921	The militant Akalis hold meeting at Amritsar in the office of the Secretary, Akali Dal.

- May 21, 1921 The militant Akalis hold meeting and depute Bela Singh and Ganda Singh to murder J.W.Bowring.
- May 23, 1921 Bela Singh and Ganda Singh are arrested and the conspiracy ends in a fiasco.
- June 4, 1921 Kishan Singh becomes fugitive.
- June, 1921 Master Mota Singh leaves for North-west Frontier Province.
- October 29, 1921 Keys of the Tosa Khana of Golden Temple, Amritsar taken away by the Government official.
- October, 1921 Karam Singh holds a conference at Kukar Majra.
- Kishan Singh addresses meetings at Hardaspur, Plahi and Chaheru.
- November 1, 1921 Karam Singh of Daulatpur leads a jatha of 50 Akalis, at the call of the S.G.P.C. to capture the Gurdwara of Hothian.
- November 8, 1921 First Akali Conspiracy case starts.
- November 15, 1921 Master Mota Singh appears and delivers a fiery speech at Nankana, on the occasion of the birthday of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji.
- Baba Gurdit Singh of Koma Gata Maru fame offers, himself, for arrest at Nankana.
- November, 1921 S. Kishan Singh floats Chakarvarti Jatha.
- Conference at Rurka Kalan, meetings at Chehru, Phagwara, Jullundur and a diwan at Birring takes place.
- December 6, 1921 S.Kishan Singh Gargaj delivers anti-British speech at Haripur
- December 12, 1921 Master Dalip Singh of Gossal attends Rurka Kalan diwan and delivers a lecture there.
- December 21, 1921 A diwan is arranged at Jhingar.

December 24-28, 1921 Kishan Singh attends diwans at Chamkaur Sahib and Sirhind.

January 12, 1922 The Akalis under Mula Singh Bahawal take control of Anandpur Sahib. The militant Akalis under Kishan Singh help capture the Gurdwara of Kiratpur Sahib.

January 17, 1922 The Akalis, arrested in connection with the keys agitation, are released.

January 18, 1922 The keys of the Tosakhana are delivered to Baba Kharek Singh at Akal Takhat.

January 25, 1922 Karam Singh of Daulatpur arranges diwan at Nawanshahr.

January 31, 1922 Meeting is held at Jadia.

February 24-26, 1922 A diwan is held at Ghurial on the concluding day of 101 'Akhand-Paths'

- A conference is held at Kot Patuhi.

March 14, 1922 Kishan Singh Gargaj delivers a fiery and anti-British speech at Anandpur Sahib, on the occasion of Hola Mohalla.

March, 1922 A diwan is arranged at Buhani.

March, 18, 1922 A diwan is held at Sirhala.

March 19, 1922 A diwan at Sangowal is held by S. Kishan Singh.

March 20, 1922 A Conference at Apratakes place.

March 24, 1920 Meeting at Rajowal by Kishan Singh group to devise ways and means of 'reforming' the toadies.

April 13, 1922 A meeting is convened at Sadhara by Karam Singh of Daulatpur group to consider the reformation of the toadies.

April 22, 1922 A police party raids Birring to arrest Kishan Singh and Master Mota Singh

May 11, 1922 Sunder Singh Makhauspuri is arrested at Sundh.

- May 20, 1922 Harnam Singh Mehdipur is assaulted by Chakarvartis of Kishan Singh group.
- May 28, 1922 A meeting is called at Kaulgarh by Karam Singh group to reform the iholichuks.
- Assa Singh and Dalip Singh Sadhara seek the advice of Kishan Singh in connection with the decisions of Kaulgarh meeting at Basiala.
- June 16, 1922 Master Mota Singh is arrested from his village.
- July 3, 1922 Kaka, Lambardar of Bachauri, is robbed of Rs. 570/2 by Karam Singh group.
- July 9, 1922 Kishan Singh considers merger of both the Chakarvarti jathas. He alongwith Assa Singh, reaches Hayatpur to meet Karam Singh.
- August 18, 1922 Karam Singh of Jhingar, Master Dalip Singh of Gossal and Kishan Singh visit Montgomery jail to meet Master Mota Singh.
- August 20, 1922 Babbar Akali Akhbar is started by Karam Singh.
- August 22, 1922 Guru Ka Bagh Morcha starts.
- The Babbar Akali Jatha is floated after the merger of chakarvati jathas.
- September, 1922 Kishan Singh Gargaj addresses a letter to the Secretary S.G.P.C. asking him to give up the policy of Non-violence at Guru Ka Bagh.
- Meeting at Rajonai to plan the murder of Arjan Singh Patwari, alleged to be responsible for the arrest of Master Mota Singh.
- October, 1922 The Babbar Akalis attend "Charan Ki Chhinj" at Achaipur.
- October 20, 1922 Leaflets are distributed by the Babbar Akalis in the "Parkarna" of the Golden Temple, ridiculing non-violence.
- November 30, 1922 The Panjab Government announces rewards for the arrest of the Babbars.

December 8, 1922	Letters of the soldiers printed in the "Babbar Akali Akhbar".
December 25, 1922	First meeting is held at Jassowal to decide the reformation" of the <u>jholichuks</u> .
December 30-31, 1922	Second meeting at Jassowal takes place.
January 5, 1923	Karam Singh of Jhingar and Dalip Singh of Gossal are arrested.
January 12, 1923	Letters of soldiers are printed in the "Babbar Akali Akhbar".
January 16, 1923	First abortive attempt is made to kill Arjan Singh Patwari of Haripur.
January 23, 1923	Dhanna Singh Behbalpur joins the 'Babbar Akali jatha'.
	- Second attempt to kill Arjan Singh Patwari of Haripur also ends in fiasco.
January 24, 1923	Pragpur is raided to arrest Kishan Singh Gargaj.
February 2, 1923	A dacoity is committed at Jadla.
February 10, 1923.	Bishan Singh Zaildar of Rani Thua is murdered.
February 13, 1923	A police informer, Diwan, is murdered by the Babbar Akalis.
February 16, 1923.	Waryam Singh of Dhugga and Dalipa of Dhammar join the Babbar jatha.
February 22, 1923	Third meeting takes place at Jassowal.
February 26, 1923	Kishan Singh Gargaj is arrested from Pindori Mahal.
March 1, 1923	Assa Singh of Phakrudi is arrested from Kiratpur Sahib.
March 3, 1923	Dacoity at Jamsar railway station is committed by the Babbar Akalis.
March 10, 1923	Buta Singh, Lambardar of Nangal Shamman is murdered.



- March 14, 1923 First attempt is made to kill Labh Singh Dhadha, responsible for the arrest of Kishan Singh.
- March 17, 1923 Second attempt to kill Labh Singh Dhadha also fails.
- March 19, 1923 Labh Singh of Garhshankar is murdered.
- March 22, 1923. First declaration of the Babbars owning the murders and open letter by the Babbar Akalis to Lt. Governor, Panjab, is issued.
- March 23, 1923 Third attempt to kill Labh Singh Dhadha also aborts.
- March 23, 1923 The police conduct simultaneous raids at Pindori Nijjaran, Kishan Pura, Jassowal, Bika, Pragpur, and Rehsiwal etc.
- March 26, 1923 Amar Singh granthi of Kot. Fatuhi is arrested.
- March 27, 1923 Hazara Singh Sirbrah of Behbalpur is murdered.
- April 3, 1923 First attempt is made by the Babbars to murder Lambardars and Cheukidars of Pindori Nijjaran.
- April 17, 1923 Subedar Ganda Singh of Ghurial is murdered.
- April 20, 1923 Second attempt to murder Lambardars and Cheukidars of Pindori Nijjaran also fails.
- April 22, 1923 The arrests of the Babbar Akalis start.
- April 23, 1923 The Government of the Panjab takes steps to release the Akalis, arrested in connection with the Guru Ka Bagh morcha.
- April 24, 1923 The S.G.P.C. declares its dissociation with the Babbar Akalis.
- April 25, 1923 The Akalis arrested in connection with the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha are released.
- Second proclamation for the apprehension of the Babbars is issued.

May 20, 1923	Ralla and Dittu of Kaulgarh murdered.
May 21, 1923	Second letter of the Babbar Akalis owning the murders is issued.
May 29-30, 1923	The S.G.P.C., again, declares the Babbar Akalis, anti-Panthic.
June 6, 1923	Ata Mohammed Patwari of Mandachaur, murdered by the Babbar Akalis.
June 20, 1923	Babu Santa Singh arrested at Tapa railway station.
July 7, 1923	The S.G.P.C. sends First Enquiry Committee to probe the excesses by the Police in the Doaba.
July 15, 1923	Bishan Singh Sandhara assaulted by the Babbar Akalis.
July 22, 1923	Subedar Amar Singh of Dhaliwal, a military pensioner and a member of the S.G.P.C. arrested.
August 8, 1923	Third Proclamation announcing rewards for the arrest of the Babbars, issued.
August 14, 1923	Buta Singh of Pindori Nijjaran, arrested.
August 15, 1923	The case of the Babbars, starts.
August 17, 1923.	The Babbars are produced in the court.
September 1, 1923	Babeli carnage takes place.
September 6, 1923	The S.G.P.C. appoints second enquiry committee to go into the Doaba excesses.
September 13, 1923	Second Enquiry Committee arrested by the police.
September 19, 23	Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad, arrested.
September 21, 1923	Udham Singh of Jandoo Singha, a member of the S.G.P.C. arrested.
September 23, 1923	Sixty three Babbars challaned.
October 12, 1923	Dalipa of Dhamian arrested at Mian Channun, District Montgomery.

October 25, 1923	Dhenna Singh explodes a bomb at Mannanhana.
November 13, 1923	Jawala Singh of Kotli Bawa Dass murdered.
December 12, 1924	Munder carnage takes place.
December 29, 1923	Sadha Singh of Pandori Nijjaran dies during the trial.
January 29, 1924	The Babbar Akali conspiracy case Supplementary I is brought before the committing magistrate.
April 4, 1924	Both, the cases are committed to the sessions.
June 2, 1924	The case starts in the court.
June 8, 1924	Waryam Singh of Dhugga killed at Chak No.54, District Lyallpur.
December 13, 1924	Sunder Singh of Hayat Pur dies during the trial.
February 28, 1925	Five Babbar Akalis are sentenced to death.
January 19, 1926	After an appeal in the High Court 6 Babbars instead of 5 are sentenced to death.
February 27, 1926	Six Babbar Akalis are executed.
February 28, 1926	Seven are sentenced to death in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II.
February 27, 1927	After an appeal in connection with Supplementary II in the High Court 6 are sentenced to death and are sent to the gallows.
October-November, 1929	The Akalis of Malwa plan to start the Babbar movement.
May 16, 1931	Sadhu Singh of Sandhara sent to the gallows.
July 15, 1932	Rattan Singh of Rakkar killed, in an encounter with the police.
December 8, 1933	The Babbar Akalis murder Bela Singh of Zian.

<b>June 21, 1936</b>	<b>Anup Singh of Manko Murdered.</b>
<b>April 8, 1938</b>	<b>Karam Singh Jhingar dies on the last day of imprisonment.</b>
<b>August 10, 1938</b>	<b>Kartar Singh Kirti and Gurdit Singh of Mandholi sent to the scaffold for the murder of Anup Singh.</b>
<b>March 13, 1940</b>	<b>Sir Michael O'Dwyer shot dead by Udham Singh of Sunam, in London.</b>
<b>March 15, 1940</b>	<b>Karam Singh of Mannanahana, responsible for the death of Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur, is murdered.</b>
<b>June 13, 1940</b>	<b>Udham Singh sentenced to death.</b>
<b>June 27, 1940</b>	<b>S.G.M. Beatty shot dead by the Babbar Akalis of Malwa at Chatha Sekhwan.</b>
<b>July 31, 1940</b>	<b>Udham Singh is sent to the gallows.</b>
<b>January 10, 1943</b>	<b>Harbans Singh of Sirhala arrested.</b>
<b>April 3, 1944</b>	<b>Harbans Singh sent to the scaffold.</b>
<b>September 1, 1946</b>	<b>First Babbar Shahidi Conference, at Gurdwara Chaunta Sahib (Babeli), takes place.</b>

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APPENDIX 2A LIST OF LIVING BABBAR AKALIS

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name and Address</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Conspiracy Case</b>
1	Atma Singh s/o Sham Singh village Khusropur (District Jullundur)	-	Babbar conspiracy case, a.n.90.
2.	Banta Singh s/o Khem Singh, Village Pragpur(District Jullundur)	1901	a.n. 2
3.	Bakhsish Singh s/o Prem Singh, Village Pindori, Nijjaran (District Jullundur)	1905	a.n.86
4.	Beant Singh s/o Chanda Singh, Village Nangal Kalam (District Hoshiarpur).	-	a.n.87
5.	Bhan Singh s/o Jawahar Singh, Village Mangat(District Jullundur)	-	a.n.75
6.	Buta Singh s/o Thakur Singh Village Pindori Nijjaran (District Jullundur)	August 1898	a.n.55
7.	Diwan Singh s/o Hira Singh, village Alowal(District Amritsar)	-	Supplementary II
8.	Hardit Singh s/o Munsha Singh, Village Jassoval (District Hoshiarpur)	1895	Babbar Conspiracy case, a.n.45.
9.	Hazara Singh s/o Inder Singh, Village Munder (District Jullundur)	-	Supplementary II
10.	Hukam Singh s/o Deva Singh, Village Pindori Nijjaran (District Jullundur)	1906	Babbar Conspiracy case, a.n.11

contd...



## APPENDIX 2 contd:

11.	Kartar Singh s/o Dewa Singh, Village Pindori Nijjaran (District Jullundur)	1905	a.n. 9
12.	Milkha Singh s/o Gulab Singh, Village Pindori Nijjaran (District Jullundur)	15 August 1905	a.n. 12
13.	Rattan Singh s/o Hazara Singh, Village Singriwala (District Hoshiarpur)	-	a.n. 36
14.	Shiv Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, Village Haripur (District Jullundur)	1896	a.n.19
15.	Surain Singh s/o Thakar Singh, Village Daulatpur, Tehsil and District Jullundur.	1897	Supplementary II.

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APPENDIX 3BABBAR AKALI DOABA

This was the organ of the Babbar Akalis and it spread their message in the Doaba to a great extent. In all fifteen issues were brought out from August 20, 1922 to May 21, 1923. Karam Singh of Daulatpur brought out its two issues, while the rest, except three, were the work of Jathedar Kishan Singh. The last issue was entirely the work of Babu Santa Singh. Despite best efforts, it has not been possible to locate any copy of the paper. However, the extracts quoted in contemporary newspapers and the court records have been traced. The gist of some of them is given against each issue, below:

- |                       |                                                                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. August 20, 1922    | Call to plunder treasuries.                                         |
| 2. August 22, 1922    | Lamentation over the arrest of Sikh leaders like Master Mota Singh. |
| 3. August 23, 1922    | Appeal for unity.                                                   |
| 4. September 9, 1922  | 'Khande da Geet' - a poem by Kishan Singh Gargaj                    |
| 5. September 21, 1922 | Appeal to soldiers to join the Babbar Akali ranks.                  |
| 6. October 6, 1922    | --                                                                  |
| 7. October 20, 1922   | Criticism of Mahants as well as the S.G.P.C.                        |
| 8. October 25, 1922   | --                                                                  |
| 9. November 19, 1922  | Critical of the S.G.P.C.                                            |
| 10. December 8, 1922  | Letters of the soldiers printed in Babbar Akali Doaba.              |

contd..

## APPENDIX 3 contd:

- |                       |                                                                                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. December 25, 1922 | Kalghi Dhar Number.                                                                      |
| 12. January 12, 1923  | Letters of the soldiers and the<br>gist of their talk with D.C.<br>Jullundur, published. |
| 13. March 22, 1923    | Open letter to the Governor of the<br>Panjab.                                            |
| 14. April 14, 1923    | Appeal to the people to swell<br>the Babbar ranks.                                       |
| 15. May 21, 1923      | Second Declaration of the Babbar<br>Akalis owning Kaulgarh murders was<br>printed.       |
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APPENDIX 4A list of the Newspapers and Magazines that supported the Babbar Akali Movement:

	S.No.	Name of the Paper/Magazines	Language	Place of Publication
<u>News- papers</u>	1	The Ajit	Panjabi	Amritsar
	2	The Babbar Sher	Panjabi	Amritsar
	3	The Desh Sewak	Panjabi	Amritsar
	4	The Desh Sewak	Panjabi	Jullundur
	5	The Gargaj Akali	Panjabi	Amritsar
	6	The Gurdwara	Urdu	Amritsar
	7	The Jathedar	Panjabi	Amritsar
	8	The Kirpan Bahadur	Panjabi	Amritsar.
	9	The Panch (W)	Panjabi	Amritsar
	10	The Qaumi Bab-bar Sher'	Panjabi	Amritsar
	11	The Zamindar	Urdu	Lahore
<u>Mag- azines</u>	12	The Ghadr	Panjabi	San Francisco
	13	The Hans	Hindi	Allahabad
	14	The Kirti	Panjabi	Amritsar
	15	The Phulwari	Panjabi	Amritsar

APPENDIX 5First Akali Conspiracy Case, Lahore 1921

From November 8, 1921 to May 18, 1922

Trying Magistrate, P.J. Rust

Sr.No.	Name and address
1	Amar Singh, Kot Barre Khan (Gujranwala)(approver)
2	Amar Singh, Delhi (absconded).
3.	Bachittar Singh, Dhuri (Sangrur)
4.	Battan Singh, Kahiri (Hoshiarpur), died in July, 1921.
5.	Bela Singh, Gholia Khurd (Ferozepur) - sentenced to 5 years term of imprisonment.
6.	Bijla Singh, Charuan, District Patiala, absconded.
7.	Bishan Singh, Sherpur (Sangrur).
8.	Bur Singh, Lussar, Karam Singhwala (Sialkot).
9.	Chanchal Singh, Jandiala (Jullundur).
10.	Chattar Singh, Tung (Gujranwala)(approver)
11.	Chattar Singh, Jethuwal (Amritsar).
12.	Ganda Singh, Sarhali Khurd (Amritsar) (approver).
13.	Gurbachan Singh, Ambala, District Hoshiarpur, absconded.
14.	Gurbakhash Singh, Peshawari (approver).
15.	Kishan Singh, Birring, District Jullundur, absconded.
16.	Mota Singh, Patara, District Jullundur, absconded.
17.	Narain Singh, Chattiwind (Amritsar).
18.	Prem Singh, Lahore (approver).
19.	Sarmukh Singh Kahiri (Hoshiarpur) (approver)
20.	Sham Singh, Kahiri (Hoshiarpur).

contd...



**APPENDIX 5 contd:**

- 21        **Sadhu Singh, Dhuri (Sangrur).**
  - 22        **Shankar Singh, Pindori Bibi (Hoshiarpur).**
  - 23.       **Tara Singh, Thethar (Lahore), sentenced to 5 years.**
  - 24.       **Thakar Singh, Bhojowal (Jullundur).**
  - 25.       **Tota Singh, Peshawar, sentenced to 5 years term of imprisonment.**
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APPENDIX 6Babbar Akali Conspiracy case  
(Main and Supplementary I)

(i) The following were sentenced to death and actually hanged on 27th February, 1926:

Sr.No.	Accused No.	Name and Address
1	76	Dalipa s/o Labh Singh, V. Dhamian(Hoshiarpur).
2	48	Dharam Singh s/o Sobha Singh, v.Hayatpur Jullundur).
3	20	Karam Singh s/o Bhagwana, v.Haripur(Jullundur).
4	1	Kishan Singh s/o Pateh Singh, v.Birring(Jullundur)
5	22	Nand Singh s/o Ganga Singh, v Ghurial (Jullundur).
6	51	Santa Singh s/o Suba Singh, V.Chhoti Herion, District Ludhiana.

(ii) The following were sentenced to life imprisonment:

7	6	Atma Singh s/o Maya Singh, V.Bika(Jullundur).
8	55	Buta Singh s/o Thakar Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
9	5	Dalip Singh s/o Aeshru Singh, V. Gossal (Jullundur)
10	49	Dalip Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V.Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).
11	8	Karam Singh s/o Duni, V.Jhingar (Jullundur).
12	9	Kartar Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
13	64	Mann Singh s/o Hira Singh, V.Gobindpur (Gujjaranwala).
14	63	Partap Singh s/o Lal Singh, V.Chhabilpur(Sialkot).
15	50	Piara Singh s/o Puran Singh, V.Dhamian(Hoshiarpur)

contd..

## APPENDIX 6 contd:

16	30	Sunder Singh s/o Natha Singh, V.Makhauspur (Hoshiarpur).
17	47	Surjan Singh s/o Hamir Singh, V. Hayatpur(Hoshiarpur).
18	39	Thakar Singh s/o Gurmukh Singh, V.Rajowal (Hoshiarpur).
19	61	Thakar Singh s/o Mayya Singh, v. Bharta (Hisharpur).

(iii) The following were transported for fourteen years:

20	91	Chhaja Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V. Chanthu (Hoshiarpur)
21	58	Kartar Singh s/o Surjan Singh, v.Gondpur(Hoshiarpur).
22	41	Labh Singh s/o Suba Singh, V.Jassowal(Hoshiarpur)
23	59	Munsha Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Johal (Jullundur).

(iv) The following were sentenced to seven years term of imprisonment:

24	2	Banta Singh s/o Khem Singh, v. Pragpur (Jullundur).
25	23	Banta Singh s/o Pal Singh, V.Daulatpur(Jullundur)
26	35	Bhagwan Singh s/o Dula Singh, Fatehpur Kothi (Hoshiarpur).
27	37	Duman Singh s/o Munshi Singh, Pindori Mahtaman (Hoshiarpur).
28	40	Gurbachan Singh s/o Dalip Singh, V. Sadhara (Hoshiarpur).
29	43	Hari Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V. Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).
30	45	Hardit Singh s/o Munsha Singh, V. Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).
31	25	Hari Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V. Daulatpur (Jullundur)
32	77	Kartar Singh s/o Bagga Singh, V. Domeli(Kapurthala).
33	78	Kartar Singh s/o Basant Singh, V.Domeli(Kapurthala).

contd..

## APPENDIX 6 contd:

34	28	Kartar Singh s/o Achharu, V. Muzara Kalan(Jullundur)
35	29	Ram Singh s/o Lalu, V.Muzara Kalan(Jullundur)
36	19	Shiv Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, V. Haripur (Jullundur)
37	24	Thakar Singh s/o Achhar Singh, V. Daulatpur(Jullundur).
38	4	Ujjagar Singh s/o Partap Singh, V. Bisrampur(Jullundur)
39	26	Waryam Singh s/o Sawan Singh, V. Daulatpur(Jullundur)
40	27	Waryam Singh s/o Bhagwana, V.Muzara Kalan(Jullundur)

(v) The following were sentenced to 6 years term:-

41	56	Amar Singh s/o Basant Singh, V. Rajoval(Hoshiarpur)
42	57	Chhajja Singh s/o Mihan Singh, V. Massanian(Jullundur).

(vi) The following were transported to 5 years term of imprisonment:

43	7	Arjan Singh s/o Sher Singh, V.Sundh (Jullundur)
44	74	Chanchal Singh s/o Waryam Singh, V.Sangatpur (Kapurthala).
45	72	Dalip Singh s/o Dasaundha Singh, V.Manak(Kapurthala).
46	69	Mehnga Singh s/o Baisakha Singh, V. Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
47	71	Mula Singh s/o Ram Singh, V.Plahi(Kapurthala).

(vii) The following was sentenced to 4 years of imprisonment:

48	79	Banta Singh s/o Jaimal Singh, V. Behbalpur(Hoshiarpur)
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(viii) The following died during the trial:

49	10	Amar Singh s/o Sant Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran(Jullundur)
50	13	Sadha Singh s/o Narain Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).

51        31        Waryam Singh s/o Narain Singh, V. Kot Fatuhi  
(Hoshiarpur).

(ix) The following were acquitted:

52	52	Amar Singh s/o Natha Singh, V. Dhaliwal(Kapurthala).
53	90	Atma Singh s/o Sham Singh, V. Khasropur(Jullundur).
54	86	Bakhsish Singh s/o Prem Singh, V. Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
55	80	Basant Singh s/o Bata Singh, V. Randhawa Masandan (Jullundur).
56	60	Battan Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V. Ganeshpur (Hoshiarpur).
57	65	Bawa Singh s/o Bhulla Singh, V. Kaulgarh(Hoshiarpur).
58	88	Beant Singh s/o Chanda Singh, V. Mangal Kalan (Hoshiarpur).
59	75	Bhan Singh s/o Jawahar Singh, V. Mangat (Jullundur).
60	54	Chanda Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Plahi (Kapurthala)
61	44	Charan Singh s/o Khushal Singh, V. Jassowal (Hoshiarpur)
62	34	Dalel Singh s/o Devi, V. Mannanhana (Hoshiarpur).
63	68	Dalip Singh s/o Dit Singh, V. Sadhara (Hoshiarpur).
64	53	Darbara Singh s/o Mangal Singh, V. Plahi(Kapurthala).
65	82	Dhanna Singh s/o Mihal Singh, V. Sadhara(Hoshiarpur).
66	73	Dharam Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Plahi (Kapurthala).
67	62	Ganga Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Lihal (Gurdaspur).
68	84	Harbans Singh s/o Khem Singh, V. Sirhala Khurad (Hoshiarpur).
69	46	Hari Singh s/o Basant Singh, V. Chela (Hoshiarpur).
70	67	Harnam Singh s/o Ralla Singh, V. Garhi Janungoan (Hoshiarpur).
71	17	Harnam Singh s/o Sidhu V. Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).

contd...

## APPENDIX 6 contd:

72	11	Hukam Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
73	89	Jaswant Singh s/o Eham Singh, V.Khusropur(Jullundur).
74	21	Jagjit Singh s/o Dalip Singh, V.Kuthar (Jullundur)
75	42	Karam Singh s/o Bhola Singh, V.Jassowal(Hoshiarpur).
76	18	Kartar Singh s/o Suchet Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
77	12	Milkha Singh s/o Gulab Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
78	85	Milkha Singh s/o Uttam Singh, V. Moranwali(Hoshiarpur)
79	81	Narain Singh s/o Dasaundha Singh, V.Chattiwind (Amritsar).
80	14	Nirvair Singh s/o Santa Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).
81	3	Pren Singh s/o Pal Singh, V.Pragpur (Jullundur).
82	36	Rattan Singh s/o Hasara Singh, V.Singriwala(Hoshiarpur)
83	33	Sardul Singh s/o Partap Singh, V.Burro Barian (Hoshiarpur).
84	38	Sham Singh s/o Mehar Singh, V.Rehsiwal(Hoshiarpur).
85	32	Sunder Singh s/o Nand Lal, V.Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur).
86	83	Sunder Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Khanpur Kulewal (Hoshiarpur).
87	37	Surjan Singh s/o Suchet Singh, V.Domeli (Kapurthala).
88	16	Thakur Singh s/o Mihan Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur)
89	87	Udham Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, V.Jandu Singha (Jullundur).
90	66	Udham Singh s/o Baisakha Singh, V.Kaulgarh(Hoshiarpur)
91	15	Udham Singh s/o Ralla Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur)

contd..



## APPENDIX 6 contd:

(x) Besides these 91, the following were also implicated in this case. They were killed in encounters with the police or died in the Judicial lock up. Some of them turned approvers, while others were let off:

(a) The following were let-off after preliminary investigation:-

1. Lakha Singh )
2. Bawa Singh ) V.Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur)
3. Bhulla Singh )
4. Jagat Singh, V. Plahi (Kapurthala)
5. Gokal Singh, V. Simbli (Hoshiarpur)

(b) The following died in the judicial lock-up:

1. Chattar Singh s/o Bhup Singh, V.Kandhola (Jullundur).
2. Sunder Singh s/o Sob ha Singh, V.Hayatpur(Hoshiarpur).

(c) The following met their end in the encounters with the police while they were evading their arrest:

1. Banta Singh, V. Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).
2. Bishan Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V.Mangat (Jullundur).
3. Dhanna Singh s/o Inder Singh, V.Behbalpur(Hoshiarpur).
4. Jawala Singh, V. Fatehpur Kothi (Hoshiarpur).
5. Karam Singh s/o Natha Singh, V.Daulatpur (Jullundur).
6. Mohinder Singh s/o Labha, V.Pindori Ganga Singh (Hoshiarpur).
7. Uday Singh s/o Hira Singh, V.Ramgarh Jhugian(Hoshiarpur).
8. Waryam Singh, V.Dhugga (Hoshiarpur).

(d) The following was hanged in another case:

1. Nand Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V.Dhariwal (Kapurthala )

contd..

## APPENDIX 8 contd:

(e) The following were arrested but they turned approvers:

1. Amar Singh s/o Ganda Singh, V. Kot Barre Khan (Gujjaramwala) Granthi at Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur).
2. Kartar Singh Sant s/o Sherafdin, V. Pragpur (Jullundur) alias Fateh Din of Desu Malkana.
3. Kartar Singh s/o Jawala Singh, V. Burro Barrian (Hoshiarpur).
4. Batten Singh s/o Harnam Singh, V. Pindori Nijjara (Jullundur).
5. Bela Singh s/o Arur Singh, V. Nadala (Kapurthala) - Teacher at Plahi.
6. Ram Singh s/o Bhagwana, V. Musara Kalan (Jullundur).
7. Tufail Mohammed s/o Aman-ud-din, V. Pindori Nijjara (Jullundur)
8. Sadhu Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Pragpur (Jullundur).
9. Ram Singh s/o Gurmukh Singh, V. Hayatpur (Hoshiarpur).
10. Anup Singh s/o Inder Singh, V. Manko (Jullundur).
11. Maluk Singh s/o Natha Singh, V. Plahi (Kapurthala).
12. Jawand Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Johal (Jullundur).
13. Bela Singh s/o Khushal Singh, V. Pragpur (Jullundur).
14. Sant Mit Singh s/o Kharak Singh, V. Kishanpura (Jullundur) of Desu Malkana (Hissar).
15. Kirpal Singh s/o Rann Singh, V. Malakpur (Rawalpindi).
16. Chanda Singh s/o Chhaja Singh, V. Domeli (Kapurthala).
17. Hazara Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V. Munder (Jullundur).
18. Assa Singh s/o Ram Ditta, V. Phakrudi (Jullundur).
19. Banta Singh s/o Ghaneya Singh, V. Bopa Rai (Kapurthala).
20. Bela Singh s/o Fattu, V. Bopa Rai (Kapurthala).

contd...

## APPENDIX 6 contd:

- 21      Dhanna Singh s/o Hakam Singh, V.Kotli Bawa Dass  
(Hoshiarpur).
- 22      Nazara Singh s/o Inder Singh, V.Munder (Jullundur).  
  
(He turned hostile in the court and was, thus, tried  
in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary  
II and was sentenced to life on February 28, 1926).
- (f)    The following was arrested and tried in the Babbar Akali  
Conspiracy case, Supplementary II:-
1.      Harbakhsh Singh s/o Arjan Singh, V.Jassowal  
(Hoshiarpur).
- (g)    The following could never be arrested by the police:
1.      Amar Singh s/o Isher Singh, V.Mandhiani (Hoshiarpur).
2.      Gurbachan Singh s/o Mali, V.Daulatpur (Jullundur).
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APPENDIX 7BABBAR SUPPLEMENTARY CASE II

(Crown versus Nikka Singh and others)

(1) The following were sentenced to death and actually hanged on February 27, 1927:

1. Banta Singh s/o ---- , V. Gurusar Satlani (Amritsar).
2. Gujjar Singh s/o ---- , V. Dhapa (Ludhiana).
3. Mukand Singh s/o ---- , V. Jassoval (Ludhiana)
4. Nikka Singh s/o Buta Singh, Village Alowal (Amritsar).
5. Nikka Singh s/o Dhonkal Singh, V. Gill (Ludhiana).
6. Sunder Singh s/o Karam Singh, V. Lohke (Amritsar).

((11) The following were sentenced to transportation for life:

1. Bachint Singh s/o Udham Singh, V. Dumunda (Jullundur).
2. Banta Singh s/o Isher Singh, V. Alowal (Amritsar).
3. Bhola Singh s/o ----, V. Adhkare Katha (Hoshiarpur).
4. Bhola Singh s/o Waryam Singh, V. Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).
5. Gian Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Alowal (Amritsar).
6. Gurdit Singh s/o Puran Singh, V. Alipure Gudde (Lahore).
7. Hazara Singh s/o Inder Singh, V. Munder (Jullundur).
8. Isher Singh s/o Mewa Singh, V. Dichkot Manko (Lyallpur).
9. Kishan Singh s/o Taba Singh, V. Sandhara (Hoshiarpur).
10. Munsha Singh s/o Jhanda Singh, V. Samranwan (Jullundur)
11. Surain Singh s/o Thakar Singh, V. Daulatpur (Jullundur)
12. Surain Singh s/o ----, V. Kangmai (Hoshiarpur)
13. Teja Singh s/o ---- V. Alowal (Hoshiarpur).
14. Udham Singh s/o Labhu Ram, Sura-un-Nissi (Jullundur)

contd...

## APPENDIX VII contd:

(iii) The under-mentioned were acquitted by the Magistrate:

1. Banta Singh s/o ----, V. Gill (Ludhiana).
2. Diwan Singh s/o ----, V. Adhkare Kathe (Hoshiarpur).
3. Ghulam Rasul s/o ----, V. Basti Gusan (Jullundur).
4. Gurdas Singh s/o ----, V. Kotli Bawa Dass (Hoshiarpur).
5. Kashmira Singh s/o ---- V. Sabhraon (Lahore).
6. Lal Singh s/o Gulab Singh, V. Raepur Rasulpur (Jullundur).
7. Nand Singh s/o ----, V. Mundian (Hoshiarpur).
8. Naurang Singh s/o ----, V. Guruser Satlani (Hoshiarpur).
9. Pala Singh s/o ----, V. Jaur Singh Wala (Lahore).
10. Pattan Singh s/o <sup>-----V,</sup> Vein Bhosin (Amritsar).

(iv) The following died during trial:

1. Dhanna Singh s/o -----, V. Khaira Majjha (Kapurthala).

(v) The following were acquitted by the Sessions Court:

1. Diwan Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Alowal (Amritsar).
2. Surain Singh s/o -----, V. Khaira Majjha (Kapurthala).

(v) The following were acquitted on appeal in the High Court:

1. Bhan Singh s/o ----, V. Randhawa Masandan (Jullundur).
2. Harbakhsh Singh s/o <sup>Arjan Singh</sup> ---- V. Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).
3. Labh Singh s/o Gujjar Singh, V. Randhawa Masandan (Jullundur).
4. Sadhu Singh s/o Taba Singh, V. Sandhara (Hoshiarpur).

APPENDIX 8Places of Importance associated with the  
Babbar Akali Movement

Akalgarh : It is situated on the banks of the Bist Jullundur Canal, three kilometers away from Garhshankar (Hoshiarpur). It had been a venue of a big political conference in which Master Mota Singh and Teja Singh Swatantar participated during the Akali movement.

Achalpur: The village, situated in the Sivalak range, to the east of Garhshankar, was known for wrestling matches. S. Kishan Singh Gargaj and Karam Singh of Daulatpur delivered speeches there when they visited the place at the time of a 'ehhinj' in November, 1922.

Bavri Tibba: The village falls in Sangrur District and is near Sherpur. Mann Singh and Ghumand Singh of this place, played significant part in organising the Babbar Akalis of Malwa at a time when the Babbar Akali movement in the Doaba was on its last legs.

Bhaura: It is on the Banga-Garhshankar road on the 'Chitti Baen' (white vivulet), two miles north of Naura. The place was an occasional resort of Rattan Singh of Rakkar who was helped by Maulvi Ali Shah Sayyad of this village.

Bika: Atma Singh, an important Babbar Akali worker belonged to this village. The village is at a distance of four kilometers from Gunachaur on the Gunnachaur-Sirhala Kasian road.



## APPENDIX 8 contd:

**Birring:** The village was the birth place of Sardar Kishan Singh Gargaj - the architect of the Babbar Akali movement. It is at a distance of 1 kilometer from the railway station of Jullundur cantonment and now forms a part of Jullundur Municipal Corporation. A punitive police post was set up here during the Babbar Akali movement and a fine of Rs. 1400 was realised from the villagers.

**Bolina:** It is the first railway station on Jullundur-Hoshiarpur line. The village was a centre of S.Kishan Singh Gargaj's activities in 1922.

**Bopa Rai:** The village falls in Kapurthala District. Two of its inhabitants played ignoble part during the Babbar Akali movement by becoming approvers.

**Burro Barrian:** The village is towards the north of Garhshankar. Kartar Singh Akali of this village became approver in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

**Chabbewal:** It is situated on the Hoshiarpur-Garhshankar road and is in the vicinity of Siwalik Hills. The Babbar leaders S.Kishan Singh Gargaj and Babu Santa Singh met Waryam Singh of Dhugga, Banta Singh and Dalipa of Dhamian and converted them to the Babbar ideology on February 16, 1923, near this village.

Chattiwind: It is near Amritsar. Narain Singh of this place <sup>who</sup> was a colleague of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj in 2/35 Sikhs, participated in the First Akali conspiracy. He was involved in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case of 1923-25 as well.

Chelas: The village lies in Garhshankar Tehsil of Hoshiarpur District. Hari Singh Khanda of this village contributed poems to the 'Babbar Akali Doaba'.

Chhabilpur: This is the only village of Sialkot District which finds place in the annals of the Babbar Akali movement. Partap Singh s/o Lal Singh of this place took part in the movement.

Chhoti Herion: Babu Santa Singh belonged to this village. The village is situated at a distance of 3 miles to the North-East of Samrala.

Dansiwal: The village is at a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kilometers from Salla Khurad railway station. The Babbar Akalis killed Labh Singh Mistri of Garhshankar, on March 17, 1923 at the time of a 'Chhini', here.

Daulatpur: It is near Alawalpur on the Jullundur-Tanda road at a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kilometre from Kishangarh. Surain Singh of this village was sentenced to life, in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II.

**Daulatpur:** It is situated at a distance of one Kilometer to the north from the 12th milestone of Nawanshehar-Chandigarh road. The village was a big centre of the Babbar Akali activities. Karam Singh, the pre-eminent Babbar Akali leader was born here. The other Babbar Akalis of this place were Banta Singh s/o Pal Singh (a cousin of Karam Singh Babbar), Waryam Singh s/o Sohan Singh, Thakar Singh s/o Achhar Singh, Hari Singh s/o Dewa Singh and Gurbachan Singh s/o Mali. A punitive police post was also set up here and a punitive post tax of Rs. 8000/- was also imposed and realised from this village.

**Dhadda Fateh Singh:** It is near Mariana to the north of Dhamian. Labh Singh of this village got arrested S.Kishan Singh Garga; from a secluded place which lay between Dhadda and Pindori Mahal.

**Dhaliwal:** The village is situated to the North-west of Kapurthala. Amar Singh Subedar (pensioner) who led the First Pensioner's Jatha to the Guru Ka Bagh was also implicated in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

**Dhamian:** It lies three miles north of Sham-Chaurasi and is connected with the Sham-Chaurasi-Nandachaur link road. The village has been venerated by the sacrifices of its heroes. Dalipa of this village was sentenced to death in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. Banta Singh was killed in an encounter with the police in December 12, 1923

at Munder. Dalip Singh Clerk was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. Bholu Singh, elder brother of Banta Singh was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II. Piara Singh, Master Ram Singh, Lakha Singh, Faqir Singh, Jiwan Singh and Kartar Singh also suffered much during the Babbar Akali movement.

Dharam Singh s/o Banta Singh and Ujjagar Singh, a nephew of Piara Singh, were killed in the encounter with the police during the early forties.

Dhugga: It is on the border of Hoshiarpur Tehsil, north of the village, Ambala. Waryam Singh belonged to this village.

Domeli: The village lies at a distance of 10 miles from Phagwara. Kartar Singh s/o Basant Singh and Kartar Singh s/o Dugga Singh, who were sentenced to 7 years each in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, hailed from this village.

Ghurial - It lies 3 miles to the east of Kuthar. Nand Singh of this village was sent to the gallows on 27th February, 1926.

Gobindpur: The village lies in Gujjaranwala District. Mann Singh, a soldier of regiment No.52, took part in the Babbar Akali Movement.

Gobindpur: It is situated on the Banga-Kot Fatuhi road and is at a distance of 5 miles from Banga. Kabul Singh of this village was a sympathiser of the Babbars.

Gondpur: It is situated to the south-west of Mahalpur. Kartar Singh of this village was a close associate of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj. He was transported to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

Hayatpur Rurki: The village is situated at a distance of 5 miles from Garhshankar. Dharan Singh, Sunder Singh and Surjan Singh of this village were closely associated with the Babbar Akali movement.

Haripur: It lies to the east of Adampur at a distance of 5 miles. Karam Singh of this village was sentenced to death and executed on 27th February, 1926, while Shiv Singh was awarded life-imprisonment.

Jassowal: The village is situated at a distance of 1 kilometer from Salla Khurad railway station. It was an important resort of the Babbar Akalis and was known as High court in their colluqy. It remained a hub of the Babbar activities for three consecutive years. The prominent Babbar Akalis of this place were Hardit Singh, Charan Singh, Labh Singh, Karam Singh, Hari Singh, Teja Singh, Zaila Singh and Harbakhsh Singh. A remarkable thing about the village is that none of its sons turned traitor. A Punitive Police Post was set up here and punitive post tax was imposed on the village.

**Jhingar:** Karam Singh, one of the inner circle of the Babbar Akalis, belonged to this village. It is at a distance of 10 miles south of Banga.

**Johal:** It is near Bolina on the Jullundur-Hoshiarpur road.

**Kahma:** At a distance of 6 miles from Banga, it is situated on the Nawanshehar-Banga road. The village was often visited by Master Dalip Singh of Gossal. Another Babbar Akali, Hazura Singh of Hansro was killed here in an encounter with the police near the mausoleum of Baba Chain Singh.

**Kaulgarh:** It is 6 miles from Balachaur to the north-east and was a stronghold of the Babbar Akalis. The decision to reform the teadies was arrived at here, under the leadership of S. Karam Singh, in May 1922. Udham Singh, Bawa Singh and Kharak Singh were prominent Babbar Akalis of this village.

**Kishan Pura:** It is near Kala Bakra. The place was called 'Big Hospital' in the colloquy of the Babbar Akalis.

**Khajurala:** The village is situated to the east of Jullundur-Ludhiana railway line in Phagwara Tehsil of Kapurthala district.

**Khanpur Kulewal:** It was an important haunt of the Babbar Akalis. It lies in Garhshankar Tehsil.



**Khusropur:** It is in Jullundur Tehsil and is near Jullundur cantonment to the south of Jullundur-Ludhiana railway line.

**Kot Fatuhi:** The village is situated in Garhshankar Tehsil and was a venue of a big political conference held in February 1922.

**Kukar Masara:** It is situated on the 9th kilometer of the Garhshankar-Murpur Bedi road

**Kukar Pind:** It lies at a distance of 7 kilometers from Jullundur to the north-east. Baba Basant Singh of this place participated in the Babbar Akali Movement.

**Langeri:** It is situated at a distance of 1 kilometer to the South of Mahalpur.

**Libali:** It is in Gurdaspur District. Ganga Singh of this village, who was a Naik in the army helped the Babbars with arms and ammunition.

**Mahal Gehla:** It is in Navanshehar Tehsil. A Punitive Police Post was set up here to crush the Babbar Akalis.

**Makhsuspur:** It is near Kot Fatuhi. Sunder Singh s/o Natha Singh of this place had undergone life-imprisonment in connection with the Babbar Akali movement.

**Malakwal:** The solitary village of the North-western Panjab and of Rawalpindi District produced Kirpal Singh who helped the Babbar Akalis with arms and ammunition. Later on, he turned approver.

**Manaki:** It lies in Phagvara Tehsil. Dalip Singh accused No.72 of the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, hailed from this village.

**Mannanphana:** It is situated at a distance of 2 kilometers to the north-west of Kot Fatuhi. Dhanna Singh exploded a bomb here in which 9 persons were killed.

**Mangat:** It lies in Nawanshehar Tehsil near the border of Phagvara Tehsil. Bishan Singh, the martyr of Baheli, and Bhan Singh belonged to this village.

**Mehatpur:** It is situated on the Bist Doab canal at a distance of 3 kilometers from Rahon. Karam Singh of Daulatpur organised a political conference here in 1921.

**Moranwali:** It is towards the south of Behbalpur and to the west of Garhshankar. Milkha Singh, accused No.88 in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, hailed from this village.

**Mander:** It is situated on the Jullundur-Hoshiarpur road and is the last village of District Jullundur. Here, an encounter of the Babbar Akalis took place on December 12, 1923 in which Banta Singh of Dhamian and Jawala Singh of Fatehpur Kothi were killed.

**Muzara Kalan:** It is situated on Rahon-Jadla road at a distance of three miles from Usmanpur. Waryam Singh, Kartar Singh and Ram Singh took part in the Babbar Akali movement.

Nangal Shamman: The village is hardly a mile from Jullundur cantonment. The Babbar Akalis shot Buta Singh of Nangal Shamman dead, on March 10, 1923.

Pindori Niljaran: The village lies at a distance of 20 kms. from Jullundur on the linkroad leading from Adampur to Shamchaurasi. From Adampur, it is hardly 5 miles. Thirteen persons of this village took part in the Babbar Akali movement. A Punitive Police Post was also set-up here.

Pandori Mahal: Kishan Singh Gargaj was arrested here on 26th February, 1923. The village lies in Hoshiarpur District.

Pindori Rajputan: It is situated in Hoshiarpur Tehsil. Duman Singh, an ex-soldier, who took prominent part in the Babbar Akali movement, belonged to this village.

Patara: It lies to the east of Jullundur-Hoshiarpur road at a distance of 10 kilometers from Jullundur cantonment. Master Mota Singh, belonged to this village. It was called 'Mecca' by the Babbar Akalis.

Pathlawa: It is situated at a distance of 8 miles north of Banga on the Banga-Salla Khurad road. Sanga Singh of this village helped the Babbar Akalis.

Plahi: It is in Phagvara Tehsil of Kapurthala District. It is at a distance of one mile from Phagvara. It was an occasional haunt of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj.

Pragpur: It is only at a distance of 1/2 mile from Jullundur cantonment. Kishan Singh Gargaj started his activities with the help of Sant Kartar Singh in 1921 from this place.

Rajowal: It is near Rehsiwal in Hoshiarpur Tehsil. The Babbar Akali Jatha was launched here, in August 1922 in the Kutiya of Sant Thakar Singh.

Rakkar Bet: It is situated on the Balachaur-Ropar road on the Doaba Bist Jullundur Canal at a distance of 5 miles from Balachaur. Rattan Singh, hero of thirties, was born here.

Rangarh Jhuggian: It is near Hayatpur - Samundara. Udey Singh of Babeli fame belonged to this village.

Rehsiwal: It is near Rajowal. The Babbar Akali Doab leaflet was often cyclostyled here in the house of Sham Singh.

Rurki Khas: It is situated at a distance of five miles, to the east of Garhshankar. Rattan Singh met his heroic end here in an encounter with the police on July 15, 1932.

Sirhala Khurad: The village lies in Garhshankar Tehsil of District Hoshiarpur. Khem Singh pensioner and his son Harbans Singh were arrested during the Babbar Akali movement.

**Sadhara:** It is situated on the line road, which takes off from Balachaur-Garhshankar road, leading to Makhupur to the east of Mazari. Dalip Singh and his son Gurbachan Singh of this place were arrested during the Babbar Akali movement.

**Tapa:** It is a railway station between Dhuri and Bhatinda junctions. Babu Santa Singh, one of the leaders of the Babbar Akalis, was arrested from this place on June 20, 1923.

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APPENDIX 9IMPORTANT PERSONS  
INVOLVED IN THE BABBAR AKALI MOVEMENT

1. Amar Singh s/o Sant Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).

He took part in the Babbar Akali Movement. He was involved in the second abortive attempt to murder Labh Singh of Dhadra Fateh Singh. He was tried and it was during the trial that he died on December 1, 1924.

2. Amar Singh s/o Natha Singh, V. Dhaliwal (Kapurthala).

He led first Jatha of Military pensioners during the Guru Ka Bagh Moreha on October 25, 1922. He was arrested on July 22, 1923 and tried for his connection with the Babbar Akali Movement, but was acquitted on February 28, 1925.

3. Amar Singh s/o Basant Singh, V. Rajewal (Hoshiarpur).

He served 35 Sikhs but left service as a sequel of the Nankana tragedy. He grievously assaulted sufedposh Harnam Singh of Mehdiapur on May 20, 1922. He was arrested during the Babbar Akali Movement and was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. He died in November, 1937.

4. Amar Singh s/o Ishar Singh .V. Mandhiani (Hoshiarpur).

He was born in the year 1881. He took part in the Jadia dacoity and was deeply interested in the Babbar Akali Movement. He was one of the accused in the Babbar conspiracy case, but could never be arrested.



5. Ajaib Singh, V. Dakha (Ludhiana).

A fugitive from Kapurthala army, he participated in the murder of Karam Singh of Mannanahana on March 25, 1940.

6. Arjan Singh s/o Uttam Singh, V. Simbli (Hoshiarpur).

He was born in 1876. He was interned during the Babbar Akali movement.

7. Arjan Singh 'Saeh', V. Kharaudi (Hoshiarpur).

He took part in the Akali movement, but was a keen sympathiser of the Babbar Akalis as well. He underwent imprisonment for three years for the offence of holding a conference, in the memory of the Babbars, in his village in 1928. He also contributed poems to the vernacular newspapers.

8. Arjan Singh s/o Sher Singh, V. Sundh (Jullundur).

He was arrested on May 11, 1922 and was sentenced to 5 years in the Babbar Conspiracy case.

9. Atma Singh s/o Maya Singh (1902-57), V. Bika, Jullundur.

He was one of the important members of the Babbar Akali Jatha. He was arrested on April 22, 1923 and was awarded life imprisonment in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case.

10. Atma Singh s/o Sham Singh, V. Khurapur (Jullundur).

He helped the Babbar Akalis with the arms and ammunition. He was arrested for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement. He was tried and was acquitted.

11. **Avtar Singh s/o Khem Singh, V.Bakarpur (Hoshiarpur)**  
He was imprisoned for 4 months during the Babbar Akali movement.
12. **Bachan Singh, V. Loha Khera, District Sangrur.**  
He was sent to the gallows for his complicity in the murder of Mr.S.G.M. Beatty in 1940.
13. **Bachint Singh, V.Dhandoli (Kapurthala).**  
He, alongwith Ajaib Singh of Dakha, murdered Karam Singh of Mannanhana on March 25, 1940.
14. **Bachint Singh s/o Udham Singh, V. Dumanda (Jullundur).**  
He was born in 1899. He was tried in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, Supplementary II and was sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment on February 28, 1927.
15. **Bakhsish Singh (1905) s/o Prem Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).** He took part in the Babbar Akali movement and was sentenced to 5 years' term.
16. **Bakhsish Singh, V.Chabbewal (Hoshiarpur).**  
He was implicated in the murder of Bela Singh Zian on December 8, 1933 but was acquitted.
17. **Balwant Singh 'Dukhia' (1899), V. Bains (Jullundur).**  
He took part in the Babbar Akali Movement and worked under the name of London Tor Singh. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, because he celebrated 'the Babbar Day' in 1928 in Kharsudi.

18. Banta Singh (1896) s/o Pal Singh, V.Daulatpur (Jullundur).  
He was a cousin of S.Karam Singh. He was sentenced to 7 years for his participation in the Babbar Akali Movement.
19. Banta Singh s/o Khem Singh, V.Pragpur (Jullundur).  
He took part in the Babbar Akali Movement, and was sentenced to 7 years' term of imprisonment.
20. Banta Singh s/o Jaimal Singh, V.Behbalpur (Hoshiarpur)  
He served Platoon No.22. He was arrested on September 19,1923 and was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment.
21. Banta Singh (1896) s/o Waryam Singh, V.Kandhola (Jullundur).  
The Babbar Akalis took refuge with him. He was intere<sup>n</sup>ed for 3 years in his village during the Babbar Akali Movement.
22. Banta Singh (1900) s/o Waryam Singh, V.Chabbeval(Hoshiarp<sup>u</sup>r).  
He took part in the Guru Ka Bagh Morcha. After the moreha, he participated in the Babbar Akali Movement.
23. Banta Singh, V.Gill(Ludhiana).  
He was arrested and tried in the Babbar conspiracy case,Supplementary II but was acquitted.
24. Banta Singh (1900),V.Dhamian(Hoshiarpur).  
He served Platoon No.55, became fugitive and emerged as an important member of the Babbar Jatha.  
He could run as fast as a steed. The folk-song  
Banta Singh Babbar Dhamian Da,  
Lak Banh ke Nadi Tar Jave, speaks volumes of

his courage and determination. He met his heroic end at Munder, in an encounter with the police on December 12, 1923.

25. **Banta Singh V.Gurusar Satlani(Amritsar).**

He was one of the prime accused in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II and was executed on February 27, 1927.

26. **Banta Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V.Alowal (Amritsar).**

He was sentenced to life in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II. He was transported to Indoman-Nicobar Islands and died there during imprisonment.

27. **Basant Singh s/o Buta Singh, V.Randhawa Masandan.**

He took part in the Babbar Akali Movement. He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case but was acquitted.

28. **Battan Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Ganeshpur Bharta(Hoshiarpur).**

He supplied arms and ammunition to the Babbar Akalis when he served Platoon No.35. He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case but was acquitted.

29. **Bawa Singh (1896) s/o Bhulla Singh, V.Kaulgarh(Hoshiarpur).**

He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on May 22, 1923. He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was acquitted.

30. **Beant Singh s/o Chanda Singh Zaildar, V.Nangal Kalan**

(Hoshiarpur). He helped the Babbar Akalis with the arms and ammunition. He was arrested during the Babbar Akali movement but was acquitted.

31. Bela Singh (March 8, 1880) s/o Fateh Singh, V. Bopa Rai (Kapurthala). He was imprisoned for 3 years and one month during the Babbar Akali movement.
32. Bhagat Singh, V. Haripur (Jullundur).  
He was editor of the 'Desh-Sewak'. He criticised the judgement in 9 cases of the Babbar Akalis and was sentenced to jail term of 6 months on the charge of the contempt of court.
33. Bhagat Singh (1896) s/o Magha Singh, V. Saidpur (Kapurthala). He remained underground for 5 years and took part in the Babbar Akali Movement.
34. Bhagat Singh (1899) s/o Maiya Singh, V. Raipur Phorala (Jullundur). He was sentenced to 5 years' jail term on June 12, 1924 during the Babbar Akali movement.
35. Bhagwan Singh (1876) s/o Dula Singh, V. Fatehpur Kothi (Hoshiarpur). He was sentenced to 7 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He helped the Babbar Akalis in cyclostyling the Babbar Akali Doaba.
36. Bhagwan Singh (1877) s/o Khem Singh, V. Kukar Mazara (Hoshiarpur). He was sentenced to 8 months during the Babbar Akali movement.
37. Bhan Singh s/o Jawahar Singh, V. Mangat (Jullundur)  
He was sentenced to 5 years for his participation in the abortive attempt to murder the Jholichuks of Pindori Nijjaran during the Babbar Akali movement.

38. Bhan Singh, V.Randhawa Masandan (Jullundur)

He was an accused in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II. He was sentenced to life but was acquitted by the High Court. He was, however, sent to the scaffold on May 16, 1931, in another case.

39. Bishan Singh (May 15, 1885) s/o Ishar Singh,

V.Mangat (Jullundur). He joined the Babbar Akalis on September 26, 1922. He fell a martyr at Babeli on September 26, 1922. He fell a martyr at Bebeli on September 1, 1923.

40. Bishan Singh (1899) s/o Mela Singh, V.Sangoval. He was a close associate of S.Kishan Singh. He was imprisoned for 1 year in 1922, u/s 216.

41. Bhola Singh, V. Dhamian (Hoshiarpur). He was sentenced to life during the Babbar Akali cases, Supplementary II. He was the elder brother of Banta Singh, hero of Munder episode.

42. Bhola Singh (1901) s/o Kirpa Singh, V.Adhkare Kathe (Hoshiarpur). He was sentenced to life on February 28, 1925 during the Babbar Akali movement. He came out of jail on July 1, 1938.

43. Bhola s/o Prem Singh, V.Loha Khera (Sangrur).

He took part in the murder of Mr.S.G.M. Beaty at Chatha Sekhwan. He was arrested, tried and acquitted.



44. **Bhulla Singh s/o Basant Singh, V.Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur).**  
 He was a staunch Akali who took part in the Guru ka Bagh morcha as well as the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested, tried for 3 years and was, finally, acquitted.
45. **Buta Singh (1898) s/o Thakur Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran.**  
 He was one of the closest associates of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj. He took part in the Guru Ka Bagh morcha as well as the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on August 14, 1923 from Chak No.11, Dichkot Manko. He was sentenced to life term in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case on February 28, 1925.
46. **Chanchal Singh (1904) s/o S. Maryam Singh, V. Sangatpur Kalal (Kapurthala).** He was involved in the second bid to murder the Chaukidars and lambardars of Pindori Nijjaran and was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment as an accused in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
47. **Chanda Singh (1876) s/o Hari Singh, V.Plahi (Kapurthala)**  
 He was tried in the Babbar Conspiracy case but was acquitted on February 28, 1925.
48. **Chhaja Singh (1887) s/o Mihan Singh, V.Massanian (Jullundur).** He served in the Platoon No.29 but resigned during the Gurdwara Reform movement. He took part in the Guru Ka Bagh morcha. He was arrested on April 28, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement and was sentenced to a term of 6 years.

49 Chhajja Singh (1891) s/o Ishar Singh, V.Chanthu(Hoshiarpur).

He also left military service during the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on November 5, 1923 and was sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment.

50. Chhajja Singh, V.Khaira Majha.(Kapurthala).

He was an accused in the Babbar Akali case, Supplementary II, but was acquitted. During the early forties, he joined the 'Yug Paltan Dal' of S.Harbans Singh Sirhala and fell a martyr to the Babbar cause.

51. Chatter Singh s/o Bhup Singh, V.Kandhola (Jullundur).

He joined platoon No.19 of Indian army and took leave, after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. He took part in the Babbar Akali movement and was arrested. He died, during the trial, on December 21, 1923.

52. Charan Singh nee Faqir Singh s/o Khushal Singh,

V. Jassowal(Hoshiarpur). The second meeting of the Babbar Akalis took place in his Kutiya on December 30-31, 1922. The 'Babbar Akali Doaba' was also cyclostyled there. He was arrested on May 16, 1923 for his involvement in the Babbar Akali movement and was tried and sentenced to 4 years of imprisonment.

53. Dalel Singh s/o Devi, V. Mannanhana (Hoshiarpur).

He was arrested on April 22, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement and was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case. He was acquitted on February 28, 1925.

54. Dalip Singh (1896) s/o Aehbar Singh, V.Gossal (Jullundur).

He was secretary of the Babbar Akali Jatha from its inception till January 5, 1923 when he was arrested. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was sentenced to life term. After his release, he remained the staunchest supporter of the Akali Dal till his last breath.

55. Dalip Singh s/o Dit Singh, V.Sadhara (Hoshiarpur).

He was the fathedar of Nirvair Sewak Shahid Jatha Doaba, considered to be the nucleus of the Babbar activities in Balachaur-Garhshankar area. He was arrested on September 2, 1923 and tried as an accused in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was acquitted on February 28, 1925.

56. Dalip Singh (1904) s/o Ishar Singh, V.Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).

He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He died in the jail during his imprisonment.

57. Dalip Singh (1908) s/o Labh Singh, V.Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).

He took part in all the major actions of the Babbar Akalis against the toadies such as the murders of Buta of Nangal Shamman, Labh Singh of Garhshankar, Ata Mohammed Patwari and attack on Bishan Singh Sandhara. He was arrested on October 12, 1923 and was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was sent to the scaffold on February 27, 1926.

58. Dalip Singh s/o Kirpa Singh. V.Daulatpur (Jullundur).

He gave shelter to the Babbar Akalis and suffered 8 months rigorous imprisonment for this offence.

59. Dalip Singh s/o Dasaundha Singh, V.Manak (Kapurthala).

He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. After the Babeli carnage, Dhanna Singh of Behbalpur and Dalipa of Dhamian took refuge with him. He was involved in the second attempt to murder the toadies of Pindori Nijjaran. He was arrested on October 4, 1923, tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was sentenced to 5 years' of imprisonment.

60. Dalip Singh (12.12.1897) s/o Chanda Singh, V.Moranwali

(Hoshiarpur). He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He remained editor of the Desh-Sewak and was imprisoned for 2½ months.

61. Darbara Singh s/o Mangal Singh, V.Plahi (Kapurthala).

He was arrested during the Babbar Akali Movement. He was acquitted on February 28, 1925.

62. Diwan Singh (1889) s/o Hira Singh, V.Alowal (Amritsar).

He was arrested and tried in the Babbar conspiracy case, supplementary II for 2½ years but was acquitted on February 28, 1926.

63. Diwan Singh s/o Jawahar Singh, V.Haripur (Jullundur).

He was kept under the judicial lock-up for 3 months u/s 216 in 1922 in connection with the Babbar Akali movement.

64. Diwan Singh (February 25, 1886) s/o Ram Ditta, V. Bahawal (Hoshiarpur). He was detained for 1½ years in the Babbar Akali case. He was involved in the Kiratpur murder case in 1940.
65. Dhanna Singh (1881) s/o Inder Singh, V. Behbalpur (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested on October 25, 1923 at Mannanhana. He exploded a hand-grenade and was blown to pieces. About 9 policemen and officers were either killed or seriously wounded in this episode. Mr. A.F. Horton, Superintendent Police, Hoshiarpur was also one of the victims.
66. Dhanna Singh V. Khaira Majha (Kapurthala).  
He died during trial in the Babbar Conspiracy case, Supplementary II.
67. Dhanna Singh s/o Nihal Singh, V. Badhara (Hoshiarpur).  
He was one of the accused in the Babbar conspiracy case of 1925 but was acquitted.
68. Dharam Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Plahi (Kapurthala).  
He took part in the second attempt to murder the Lambardars and Chaukidars of Pindori and was sentenced to 5 years in the Babbar conspiracy case on February 28, 1925.
69. Dharam Singh (1876) s/o Sob ha Singh, V. Hayatpur (Hoshiarpur). He was involved in the murder of Diwan of Hayatpur. He was arrested on July 6, 1923 and was sent to the scaffold on February 27, 1926.

70. Duman Singh s/o Munshi Singh, V.Pindori Mahatman (Hoshiarpur). He was an ex-soldier who was sent on a pension of Rs. 10 p.m., on March 3, 1920. He took part in the second abortive bid to kill Babh Singh of Dhadda. He was arrested and tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment.
71. Ganga Singh s/o Hira Singh, V.Lihal (Gurdaspur). He was Naik in Regiment No.52, posted at Jullundur cantonment. Soon, he was drawn to the Babbar Akali movement. He supplied arms and ammunition to the Babbar Akalis. He was arrested and tried in the Babbar conspiracy case but was acquitted.
72. Ganga Singh s/o Wasir Singh, V.Kot Fatahi (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested in February 1922 for putting obstruction in the arrest of Master Mota Singh and was sentenced to 9 months' rigorous imprisonment.
73. Genda Singh, V.Sirhala Kalan (Hoshiarpur). He was involved in the Kiratpur murder case. He was arrested but was acquitted.
74. Gujjar Singh, V. Dhapai (Ludhiana). He was tried in the Babbar Supplementary case II and was sent to the gallows on February 27, 1927.
75. Gurbachan Singh (1902) s/o Dalip Singh of Sadhara (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested on April 22, 1923 and was imprisoned for 7 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. His book on the Babbar Movement - 'Babbar Akali' - has reference value.



76. Gurbachan Singh s/o Mali, V. Daulatpur (Jullundur).  
He took part in the various actions of the Babbar Akalis against the toadies. The police failed to arrest him.
77. Gian Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Alowal (Amritsar).  
He was awarded life-sentence in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II.
78. Gurdas Singh s/o Natha Singh, V. Kotli Bawa Dass, (Hoshiarpur). He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II but was acquitted.
79. Gurdit Singh s/o Puran Singh, V. Alipur Gudde (Amritsar).  
He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Supplementary II on February 28, 1926. He died in Multan jail in 1933.
80. Gurdit Singh Daler (July 1898) s/o Mangal Singh, V. Mandhali (Jullundur). He was an ex-soldier and took part in the Guru Ka Bagh, Bhai Pheru and Jaito morchas. He also remained the editor of Desh Sewak. He, along with others, murdered Anup Singh of Manko on June 21, 1936 and was sent to the gallows on August 10, 1938.
81. Harbans Singh (1906-1944) s/o Khem Singh, V. Sirhala Khurad (Hoshiarpur). He took part in the Guru Ka Bagh morcha. He was also arrested in connection with the Babbar Akali movement on 19th September, 1923. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case but was acquitted. During the world war II he

launched 'Yug Paltau Dal' and took to violent activities. Due to his involvement in the Kiratpur murder, he was sent to the gallows on April 3, 1944.

82. Harbans Singh (1889) s/o Bhagat Singh, V.Chabbewal (Hoshiarpur). He took part in the Babbar Akali movement and was imprisoned for 28 years u/s 302,307 and 395 in May, 1923.
83. Harbakhsh Singh s/o Arjan Singh, V.Jassowal (Hoshiarpur). He was an active Babbar Akali. He was declared a political absconder and was arrested from Malerkotla in 1924. He was tried as an accused in the Babbar Conspiracy case, Supplementary II, but was acquitted on February 28, 1927.
84. Hardit Singh (1895) s/o Munsha Singh, V.Jassowal (Hoshiarpur). He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. His 'Haveli' formed the venue of the First as well as fourth meeting of the Babbars. He took part in the dacoity committed at Jadla. He was arrested on April 22, 1923 and was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
85. Hari Singh s/o Deva Singh, V.Daulatpur, Tehsil Nawan Shehar(Jullundur). He was sentenced to 7 years in connection with the Jadla dacoity in the Babbar conspiracy case.

86. Hari Singh s/o Eher Singh, V.Sundh (Jullundur).  
He was an ex-Ghadrite who actively supported the Babbar Akalis by murdering Bela Singh Zian on December 8, 1933. He was accompanied by Ishar Singh of Jandoli and Sant Inder Singh of Murari.
87. Hari Singh (1899) s/o Basant Singh, V. Chela (Hoshiarpur).  
He contributed poems to the 'Babbar Akali Doaba' Akhbar and was arrested on April 22, 1923. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case but was acquitted.
88. Hari Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V.Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).  
He was arrested in connection with the Babbar Akali movement on April 22, 1923. He died during the trial.
89. Harnam Singh s/o Sidhu Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur)  
He was sentenced to three years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
90. Harnam Singh s/o Ralla Singh, V.Garhi Qanungoan (Hoshiarpur). He left army service after the Nankana holocaust. He took part in the Babbar Akali movement and was arrested on April 22, 1923 but was acquitted.
91. Hira Singh s/o Sob-ha Singh, V. Chak Phula (Hoshiarpur).  
He was kept in the judicial lock-up during the Babbar Akali movement. He died in 1923.

92. Hazara Singh s/o Attar Singh, V. Rurki Khas (Hoshiarpur).  
He helped Rattan Singh of Rakkar despite the police coercion and was shot dead alongwith Rattan Singh on July 15, 1932.
93. Hukam Singh (1906) s/o Deva Singh, V. Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur). He was tried in the Babbar Conspiracy case but was acquitted.
94. Inder Singh (1895) s/o Basant Singh, V. Pindori Ganga Singh (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested during the Babbar Akali movement for the offence of giving shelter to the Babbar Akalis and was sentenced for 7 years imprisonment.
95. Ishar Singh s/o Mewa Singh, V. Dichkot Manko (Lyallpur).  
He was sentenced to life in the Babbar conspiracy case, supplementary II on February 27, 1927.
96. Jaswant Singh s/o Sham Singh, V. Khusropur (Jullundur).  
He helped the Babbar Akalis with arms and ammunition.  
He was arrested in 1923, tried in the Babbar conspiracy case but was acquitted.
97. Jagjit Singh s/o Dalip Singh, V. Kuthar (Jullundur).  
He was arrested on September 29, 1923 for his activities during the Babbar Akali movement. He was called C.R. Dass of the Babbars. He was tried but was acquitted.
98. Jawala Singh, V. Fatehpur Kothi (Hoshiarpur). He first served army and then took part in the non-cooperation movement and finally became a member of the Akali Dal. He took keen interest in the Babbar Akali movement. He was killed in an encounter with the police at Munder on December 12, 1923.

99. Kabul Singh (December 5, 1902) s/o Ralla Singh,  
V. Gobindpur (Jullundur). He was imprisoned for the  
offence of holding a conference in the memory of the  
Babbar martyrs in 1928 in Kharoudi (Hoshiarpur).
100. Karam Singh (1888 ) s/o Mala Singh, V. Mahil Baltoha  
(Hoshiarpur). He left military service to take part  
in the National movement. He took part in the  
Babbar Akali movement in 1923. He escaped from  
Kapurthala jail. He was killed in an encounter with  
the police on July 23, 1943.
101. Karam Singh (1890-1923) s/o Natha Singh, V. Daulatpur  
(Jullundur). He joined the Sikh Regiment in 1898.  
After sometime, he became a religious recluse. Shortly  
afterwards, he went to Canada but was upset at the  
discrimination there. He came back to India and  
began to take part in the National Movement. When  
the Gurdwara Reform Movement started, he became very  
active in it. He soon took to milita<sup>nc</sup>y and brought out  
the Babbar Akali Doaba. He was the moving force behind  
all the actions against the toadies. After the arrest  
of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj, he became the supreme leader  
of the Babbar Akalis. He fell a martyr to the Babbar  
cause at Bebeli on September 1, 1923.
- 102 Karam Singh (1886-1938) s/o Duni Singh, V. Jhingar  
(Jullundur). He was an immigrant from Canada.  
Back at home, he actively began to take part in the  
National movement as well as the Gurdwara Reform

movement. He was nephew (Sister's son) of Baba Dalip Singh of Sadhara, Jathedar Nirwair Sewak Shahid Jatha Doaba. He became one of the prominent members of the Babbar Akali Jatha. He was arrested on January 5, 1923 at the behest of his brother, Kehar Singh from his house. He was tried in the Babbar Conspiracy case and was sentenced to life. He died on April 8, 1938 at the time of his release from the jail.

103 Karam Singh (1894) s/o Bhagwan Singh, V. Haripur (Jullundur).

He took part in the Gurdwara Reform movement. He arranged a conference in his village in 1922 which was attended by S. Kishan Singh Gargaj, Master Mota Singh and Kartar Singh Jhabbar. He was arrested on May 12, 1923 in connection with the murder of Genda Singh Charial. He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was sent to the gallows on February 27, 1926.

104 Karam Singh s/o Bhola Singh, V. Jassowal (Hoshiarpur).

He was very active during the Gurdwara Reform movement and was one of the members of the jatha which captured Anandpur Sahib under the leadership of Mula Singh. He was arrested on April 22, 1923, tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was acquitted.

105 Kartar Singh s/o Achhru, V. Muzara Kalan (Jullundur). He served in the army. He left service and took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested and convicted for his participation in the Jadhla dacoity and was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment.



- 106 Kartar Singh s/o Bagga Singh, V.Domeli (Kapurthala).  
He helped the Babbar Akalis and was implicated in the Babbar Conspiracy case. He was sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment.
- 107 Kartar Singh s/o Basant Singh, V. Domeli (Kapurthala)  
He was an active supporter of the Babbar Akalis. Karam Singh Babbar often stayed with him. He was arrested and tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was awarded 7 years' term of imprisonment.
- 108 Kartar Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V.Gondpur (Hoshiarpur).  
He served 41st Sikh Regiment. He resigned service and became jathedar of the Akali Dal unit of his village. He was arrested on December 13, 1923 and was tried and sentenced to 14 years of rigorous imprisonment.
- 109 Kartar Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Pindori Nijjran (Jullundur).  
He participated in the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on April 21, 1923 and was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy. He was sentenced to life on January 19, 1926.
- 110 Kartar Singh s/o Suchet Singh, V.Pindori Nijjran (Jullundur). He was arrested in connection with the Babbar conspiracy case but was acquitted.
- 111 Kartar Singh Kirti s/o Harnam Singh, V. Chak Bagarian.  
He served the Indian army but was dismissed due to his articles, critical of the government policies, published in the 'Kirti'. He was one of those who shot Anup Singh Manko dead on June 18, 1936. He was sent to the gallows on August 10, 1938.

112 Kartar Singh, V. Jaspalon (Ludhiana).

He made a bid to organise the Babbar Akali Jatha in the Malwa and was elected Jathedar in a meeting held at Sekha. His plan did not succeed as some of his associates were arrested in 1929 and the police was able to locate their hide-outs.

113 Kartar Singh, V. Chhiniwal (Sangrur). He was one of those Babbars who murdered S.G.M. Beatty. He was tried in this case but was acquitted.

114 Kashmira Singh, V. Sabhraon (Lahore).

He was arrested in connection with the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II. He was acquitted as no offence could be proved against him.

115 Kishan Singh (1891-1926) s/o Fateh Singh, V. Birring (Jullundur). He joined the army and served 2/35 Sikhs. He was a devout Sikh and was deeply interested in baptising the Sikhs. He was discharged and a pension of Rs. 22/- was forfeited due to his alleged disloyalty. After the Nankana holocaust, he was elected Secretary of the Akali Dal in the Shahidi Diwan held at Nankana. He took his charge on April 6, 1921. He, alongwith other militants, hatched a conspiracy to murder the government officials, but the whole scheme dashed to the ground. He became 'chakarvarti' and floated his jatha in November, 1921. In August 1922, he was elected Jathedar of the Babbar Akali jatha. He brought patriotic

fervour into Doaba with his 327 speeches.

He enrolled about 1400 persons as the members of the Akali Dal. He was arrested on February 26, 1923. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was held responsible for all the actions of the Babbar Akalis. He was sent to the gallows on February 27, 1926. His name shines in the galaxy of patriots like Kartar Singh Sarabha, Bhagat Singh, Ras Behari Bose and Subash Chander Bose. In patriotism he was second to none.

116 Labh Singh s/o Suba Singh, V.Jassowal (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested on April 22, 1923 during the Babbar Akali movement. He was tried and sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment. His 'Sankhep Ithas Babbar Akali' and 'Bahadur-i-Sikhan(ms) serve as reference-books for certain aspects of the Babbar Akali Movement.

117 Labh Singh s/o Gujjay Singh, V.Randhawa Masandan(Jullundur). He was arrested and tried in connection with the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II but was acquitted on an appeal in the High court in 1927. Again, he was involved alongwith Sadhu Singh of Sandhara in connection with the murder of certain traitors and was tried and sent to the gallows on May 16, 1931.

118 Labh Singh, V. Aklota (Una).

A fugitive from the army, he became member of the 'Yug-Paltan Dal' of Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurd.

119 Lakha Singh s/o Ganga Singh, V.Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur).

He was arrested on April 22, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement.

120 Lal Singh s/o Gulab Singh, V.Raipur Basulpur (Jullundur).

He was involved in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II, but was acquitted.

121 Mann Singh s/o Hira Singh, V.Gobindpur (Gujranwala).

He served in the Regiment No.52. He resigned and became jathedar of the village Akali Dal. He was sentenced to life on January 19, 1926 for his participation during the Babbar Akali movement.

122 Mann Singh, V.Barri (Sangrur). He was one of the important members of the Malwa Babbar Akali jatha. He joined Riasti Parja Mandal after the failure of the Babbar movement.

123. Mehar Singh s/o Nihal Singh (Hoshiarpur).

He took part in the Babbar Akali activities at the tender age of 15.

124. Mehnga Singh s/o Wasakha Singh, V.Pindori Nijjara (Jullundur).

He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

125 Milkha Singh s/o Uttam Singh, V.Moranwali (Hoshiarpur). He

was one of those members who took control of the Gurdwara

Anandpur Sahib on January 12, 1923. He was arrested on September 2, 1923, tried and acquitted in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

(August 1905)

- 126 Milkha Singh/s/o Gulab Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran. He came under the spell of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj, while still at school. He was arrested on April 21, 1923, tried and acquitted on February 19, 1926. He is currently writing "Babbar Akali Sangarsh" on the basis of his memoirs as well as the valuable documentary record such as Paper Book Babbar Akali Conspiracy case Supplementary I and Babbar Conspiracy case Judgement 19 25.

- 127 Mota Singh (1881-1960) s/o Gopal Singh, V.Patara (Jullundur). He was the founder-member of the S.G.P.C. He created an awakening among the Sikhs and aroused their wrath against the Mahants as well as the British. He had little faith in non-violence. He was involved in the First Akali conspiracy and as a result, his arrest warrants were issued. He left for Afghanistan. He came back and appeared on the occasion of the birthday of Sri Guru Nanak Devji at Nankana in November 1921, under his guidance Sardar Kishan Singh floated Chakravarti Jatha. He delivered speeches in the diwans and the conferences and always gave a feint to the police. This happened on March 18, 1921 on the occasion of the Rurka Conference as well as Kot Fatuni Conference in February 26, 1922.

He was arrested on June 16, 1922 and was imprisoned for 7 years. He was released on June 23, 1929. At that

time, the Babbar Akali movement had been crushed in Doaba. Later on he joined the communist party and then the Indian National Congress. He died on January 9, 1960.

128 Mula Singh s/o Ram Singh, Plahi (Kapurthala).

He took part in an unsuccessful attempt to murder the chaukidars and lambardars of Pindori Nijjaran. He was arrested on December 15, 1923 and tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was sentenced to a term of 5 years.

129 Mula Singh, Bahawal (Hoshiarpur).

He was a staunch Akali who led the jatha which took possession of the Gurdwara Anandpur Sahib on January 12, 1922. He was closely associated with Jathedar Kishan Singh for sometime.

130 Munsha Singh s/o Jhanda Singh, V.Samranwan (Jullundur).

He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II. He was transported to Indoman-Nicobar islands where he died in jail.

131 Munsha Singh s/o Bela Singh, V.Johal (Jullundur). He

served Regiment No.28. He became village Jathedar when the Gurdwara Reform movement started and resigned service. He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on September 4, 1923, was tried and sentenced to 14 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. His brother, Jawand Singh, had turned approver against him.



- 132 Mohinder Singh s/o Labhu, V.Pindori Ganga Singh (Hoshiarpur).  
He served 47th Sikh Regiment, but was tried for his pro-Akali activities after the Nankana holocaust. He helped in the distribution of the 'Babbar Akali Doaba'. He fell a martyr, at Babeli, on September 1, 1923.
- 133 Nand Singh (May 12, 1898 — February 27, 1926), s/o Ganga Singh, V.Ghurial (Jullundur). He was an active Akali. He took part in the Guru Ka Bagh morcha. He participated in the murder of Subedar Genda Singh of Ghurial. He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was sent to the gallows on February 27, 1926.
- 134 Narain Singh s/o Dasaundha Singh, V.Chattiwind (Amritsar). He was a Naik in 35 Sikhs. He helped Chakarvartis and was tried in the First Akali conspiracy case, Lahore. During the Babbar Akali movement he was arrested on October 19, 1923. He was tried but was acquitted.
- 135 Naranjan Singh s/o Dalip Singh, V.Sadhara (Hoshiarpur). He grievously assaulted Ram Singh of Masara Kalan, who had turned approver in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, in 1943 at Bachauri.
- 136 Nikka Singh s/o Buta Singh, V.Alowal (Amritsar). He was sent to the gallows in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, Supplementary II, on February 27, 1927.
137. Nikka Singh s/o Dhaunkal Singh, V.Gill (Ludhiana). He was sent to the scaffold on February 27, 1927 in the Babbar Conspiracy case, Supplementary II.

138 **Nirmal Singh, V.Sarinh (Jullundur).**

He was an associate of Harbans Singh of Sirhala; was involved in the Kiratpur murder case but was acquitted in April, 1944.

139 **Nirvair Singh s/o Santa Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).**

He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II, but was acquitted.

141 **Pala Singh, V.Jaur Singhwala (Lahore).** He was also

implicated in the Babbar conspiracy case, Supplementary II, but was acquitted.

142. **Partap Singh s/o Lal Singh, V.Chhabilpur (Sialkot).**

He was serving Regiment No.52 when he came under the spell of S.Kishan Singh Gargaj. He took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was arrested on September 7, 1923; was tried and sentenced to life on January 19, 1926.

143 **Prem Singh s/o Pal Singh, V.Pragpur (Jullundur).** He

was arrested on May 12, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement. He was tried for his complicity in the second attempt to kill Arjan Singh Patwari and was sentenced to 5 years.

144 **Piara Singh (1900) s/o Puran Singh, V.Dhamian (Hoshiarpur).**

He was involved in the murder of Buta Singh Lambardar of Nangal Shamman, was tried and sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

145 **Ram Singh s/o Lal Singh, V.Muzara Kalan(Hoshiarpur).**

He served 25 Sikh Regiment. He left service and took part in the Babbar Akali movement. He was tried for his involvement in the dacoity at Jadla and was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment.

- 146 Rattan Singh (1892) s/o Jawahar Singh, V.Rakkar (Hoshiarpur).  
 He came under the spell of S.Karam Singh Daulatpur.  
 He was arrested but escaped from the police custody.  
 He was killed on July 15, 1932 in an encounter with  
 the police at Rurki Khas (Hoshiarpur).
- 147 Rattan Singh, V.Vein Bhooin (Amritsar).  
 He was involved in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case  
 Supplementary II and was acquitted.
- 148 Rattan Singh s/o Hazara Singh, V. Singriwala (Hoshiarpur).  
 He was a man of rare courage who stole away a mare and  
 a gun from the bungalow of the Police Superintendent,  
 Hoshiarpur. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy  
 case for his complicity in the murder of Buta of Nangal  
 Shanman. He was sentenced to life but was acquitted  
 on an appeal in the High Court.
- 149 Sadha Singh s/o Narain Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).  
 He took part in the Babbar Akali movement and was  
 arrested. He died on December 29, 1924, during the  
 trial.
150. Sadhu Singh, Manak Dheri (Hoshiarpur).  
 He was a member of Yug Paltau Dal of Harbans Singh  
 of Sirhala.
- 151 Sadhu Singh s/o Taba Singh, V.Sandhara (Hoshiarpur).  
 He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case,  
 Supplementary II, but was acquitted. After his acquittal,  
 he murdered all those who had kidnapped wife of Surain  
 Singh of Daulatpur as well as widow of Banta Singh of

Dhamian to avenge the honour of the Babbars. He was arrested for these murders, tried and sent to the gallows on May 16, 1931.

152 Bhansher Singh, V. Moranwali (Hoshiarpur).

He was sent to the gallows for his alleged participation in the Kiratpur murder case, although he was quite innocent in the case. He was a member of the 'yug Paltan Dal' of Harbans Singh of Sirhala.

153 Sardul Singh s/o Partap Singh, V. Burro Barrian (Hoshiarpur).

He served Platoon No. 15. When the Gurdwara Reform movement started, he participated in it and was arrested for his involvement in the murder of Bishan Singh of Rani Thua and was sentenced to 5 years.

154 Santa Singh (1900) s/o Suba Singh, V. Chhoti Heroin (Ludhiana).

He was a clerk in regiment No. 54. During his posting at Jullundur cantonment, he came under the spell of S. Kishan Singh Gargaj. He left service in February, 1922. He took part in all the major actions against the toadies. The murder of Bishan Singh of Rani Thua was his first salvo which gave a new direction to the movement. He was elected Treasurer of the Babbar Akali Jatha. In the latter period of the movement he became its Secretary. He was arrested at Tapa railway station on June 20, 1923. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was sentenced to death on

February 28, 1925. He was sent to the gallows on February 27, 1926.

**155 Shiv Singh, V.Babeli (Kapurthala).**

He gave shelter and food to the Babbar Akalis.

On August 31, 1923 Karam Singh 'Editor' Udey Singh of Ramgarh Jhuggian, Mohinder Singh of Pindori Ganga Singh and Bishan Singh of Mangat had stayed with him. He was arrested, tried and sentenced to 7 years in the Babbar conspiracy case on January 19, 1925.

**156 Shiv Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, V.Haripur (Jullundur)**

He took part in the XIII Sikh Education Conference, held at Hoshiarpur from March 25 to 27, 1921. He participated in the Babbar Akali movement. He was involved in two of the attempts made to kill Labh Singh of Dhadda. He was tried and sentenced to 7 years in this case.

**157 Sunder Singh (January 18, 1890) s/o Karam Singh, V.Lohke Amritsar).** He was tried in the Babbar Supplementary Case II and was sent to the scaffold on February 27, 1927.

**158 Sunder Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V.Khanpur Kulewal (Hoshiarpur ).**

He helped the Babbar Akalis and was arrested for his involvement in the Babbar Akali movement. He was tried and acquitted.

**159 Sunder Singh (1891) s/o Natha Singh, V.Makhsuspur**

(Hoshiarpur). He was a right hand man of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargaj. He was arrested on May 11, 1922.

He was tried in the Babbar conspiracy case and was sentenced to life. His history of the 'Babbar Akali Lehar' despite its shortcomings remains an important source for any research scholar of the movement.

- 160 Sunder Singh s/o Nand Lal, V.Kot Fatuhi (Hoshiarpur). He was arrested, tried and acquitted for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement.
- 161 Sunder Singh s/o Sobha Singh, V.Hayatpur (Hoshiarpur) He served platoon No.32. He took part in the Gurdwara Reform movement and accompanied the Jatha which took possession of the Gurdwara Anandpur Sahib on January 12, 1922. He was arrested on August 1, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement. He died during the trial, on December 13, 1923.
- 162 Surain Singh (1899) s/o Thakar Singh, V.Daulatpur (Jullundur). He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, supplementary II. He also became a member of the 'Yug Paltan Dal' of Harbans Singh of Sirhala in the forties.
- 163 Surain Singh, V.Kangnai (Hoshiarpur). He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case, Supplementary II. He died in the jail in Indoman-Nicobar islands.
- 164 Surjan Singh s/o Suchet Singh, V.Domeli (Kapurthala). He was an ex-soldier. He was arrested on September 9, 1923 for his involvement in an attempt to murder the chaukidars



and lamdars of Pindori Nijjaran. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment.

- 165 Surjan Singh s/o Hamir Singh, V.Hayatpur (Hoshiarpur).  
He took part in the murder of Diwan of Hayatpur and was sentenced to life in this case. He died in jail.
- 166 Teja Singh, V.Alowal (Amritsar). He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II.
- 167 Thakar Singh s/o Aehhar Singh, V.Daulatpur (Jullundur).  
He took part in the dacoity committed at Jadla, was arrested and sentenced to 7 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
- 168 Thakar Singh s/o Mihan Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran (Jullundur).  
He was sentenced to 3 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
- 169 Thakar Singh s/o Maya Singh, V.Ganeshpur Bhart.  
He served Platoon No.35 and helped the Babbar Akalis with arms and ammunition. He was arrested and tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case. He was acquitted on February 28, 1925 but the Panjab government filed an appeal in the High Court. As a result of this appeal, he was sentenced to life on January 19, 1926.
- 170 Thakur Singh s/o Gurmukh Singh, V.Mundial (Hoshiarpur).  
He lived in a kutiya at Rajowal. The kutiya was an important resort of the Babbar Akalis. The Babbar Akali Jatha was launched in his kutiya and the 'Babbar

Akali Akhbar' was also duplicated here. He was sentenced to life for his involvement in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.

- 171 **Uday Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Rangarh Jhuggian (Hoshiarpur).**  
He was a close associate of S.Karam Singh of Daulatpur. He fell a martyr at Babeli on September 1, 1923.
- 172 **Udham Singh (December 28, 1899-July 31, 1940) s/o Tehal Singh, Sunam (Sangrur).** He avenged the Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy by shooting Sir Michael O'Dwyer, dead on March 13, 1940, in London. He was inspired by the Babbar Akalis of Malwa as well as the 'Yug Paltan Dal' of Sant Inder Singh of Murari.
- 173 **Udham Singh s/o Ralla Singh, V.Pindori Nijjara (Jullundur).**  
He was sentenced to 3 years for his involvement in the Babbar Akali conspiracy. He helped in the duplication of the "Babbar Akali Akhbar".
- 174 **Udham Singh s/o Wasakha Singh, V.Kaulgarh (Hoshiarpur).**  
He was arrested and tried due to his involvement in the Babbar Akali movement but was acquitted.
- 175 **Udham Singh, V. Sura-un-Nissi (Jullundur).**  
He was sentenced to life in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case, Supplementary II on February 28, 1926.
- 176 **Udham Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, V. Jandoo Singha (Jullundur).**  
He left army service to take part in the Gurdwara Reform movement. He was elected a member of the S.G.P.C.

He was arrested on September 21, 1923 for his participation in the Babbar Akali movement but was acquitted on February 28, 1925.

- 177 Ujjagar Singh (1908-1980) s/o Munsha Singh, V. Fannahli Kalan (Hoshiarpur). He avenged the death of the Babbars by participating in the murder of Anup Singh Manko on June 21, 1936.
- 178 Ujjagar Singh s/o Pritam Singh, V. Bistrampur (Jullundur) He served platoon No. 59. During the Gurdwara Reform movement, he became an Akali. He participated in the second attempt to murder Labh Singh of Dhadra. He was arrested and tried in the Babbar Akali Conspiracy case. He was sentenced to 7 years.
- 179 Ujjagar Singh, V. Dhamian (Hoshiarpur) He was killed in an encounter with the police in 1942 near Tarntaran. He was a member of the "Yug Paltan Dal" of Harbans Singh of Sirhala Khurad.
- 180 Waryam Singh s/o Sawan Singh, V. Daulatpur (Jullundur). He took part in the dacoity committed at Jadla. He was arrested in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case and was sentenced to 7 years.
- 181 Waryam Singh, V. Dhugga (Hoshiarpur). He escaped the police net at Munder on December 12, 1924. He tried to revive the Babbar Akali movement in <sup>the</sup> Bar area. He met his end at Chak No. 54 on June 8, 1924 due to the treachery of his relatives.

- 182 Waryam Singh s/o Bhagwan Singh, V. Muzara Kalan (Jullundur).  
He took part in the Jadla dacoity and was sentenced to 7 years in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case.
183. Waryam Singh s/o Narain Singh, V. Kot Fatahi (Hoshiarpur).  
He was arrested during the Babbar Akali movement. He died during the trial on December 29, 1924.
- 184 Wattan Singh s/o Dewa Singh, v. Ganeshpur (Hoshiarpur).  
He was an active soldier in the army when he supplied the arms and ammunition to the Babbar Akalis. He was tried in the Babbar Akali conspiracy case but was acquitted on February 23, 1925.
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APPENDIX 10A List of the Martyrs of the Babbar Akali Movement

(A) The following Babbar Akalis met their heroic end at Babelion Phagwara Tehsil of Kapurthala District on September 1, 1923:

1. Karam Singh S/O Natha Singh, V. Daulatpur, Tehsil Nawanshehar, Distt. Jullundur.
2. Udey Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Rangarh Jhugian, Tehsil Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur.
3. Bishan Singh s/o Isher Singh, V. Mangat, Tehsil Nawanshehar, District Jullundur.
4. Mohinder Singh s/o Labhu, V. Pinderi Ganga Singh, Tehsil Garhshankar, District Jullundur.

(B) The following fell a martyr to the Babbar cause at Mannanhana, Tehsil Garhshankar, District, Hoshiarpur on October 25, 1923:

5. Dhanna Singh S/O Inder Singh, V. Behbalpur, Tehsil Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur.

(C) The following met their end at Munder, Tehsil and District Jullundur on December 12, 1923:

6. Banta Singh, V. Dhamian, Tehsil and District Hoshiarpur.
7. Jawala Singh, V. Fatehpur, Kothi, Tehsil Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur.

(D) The following fell a martyr at Chak No. 54, District Lyallpur, on June 8, 1924:

8. Waryan Singh, V. Dhugga, Tehsil and District, Hoshiarpur.

(E) The following were hanged on 27th February, 1926 at Lahore:-

9. Kishan Singh S/O Fateh Singh, V. Birring, Tehsil and Districts, Jullundur.
10. Karam Singh S/O Bhagwan Singh, V. Haripur, Tehsil and District Jullundur.

11. Nand Singh S/O Ganga Singh, V. Ghurial, Tehsil and District Jullundur.
12. Babu Santa Singh S/O Suba Singh, V. Chhoti Herion, Tehsil Samrala, District Ludhiana.
13. Dalipa S/O Labh Singh, V. Dhamian, Tehsil and District Hoshiarpur.
14. Dharam Singh S/O Sobha Singh, V. Hayatpur, Tehsil Balachaur, District Hoshiarpur.

(F) The following were sent to the gallows on 27th February, 1927, in Lahore Central Jail:

15. Nikka Singh S/O Dhonkal Singh, V. Gill, Tehsil and District Ludhiana.
16. Nikka Singh S/O Bata Singh, V. Alowal, Tehsil Tarntarn, District Amritsar.
17. Banta Singh, Village Gurusar Satlani, Tehsil and District Amritsar.
18. Gujjar Singh, V. Dhapai, Tehsil Jagraon, District Ludhiana.
19. Sunder Singh S/O Karam Singh, V. Lohke, Tehsil and District Amritsar.
20. Mukand Singh, V. Jassewal, Tehsil and District, Amritsar.

(G) The following died while they were undergoing imprisonment in jails:

21. Dalip Singh S/O Ichar Singh, V. Dhamian, Tehsil and District Hoshiarpur (1925).
22. Hari Singh S/O Surjan Singh, V. Jassewal (Hoshiarpur), (1925).
23. Surjan Singh S/O Hamir Singh, V. Hayatpur, Tehsil Balachaur, District Hoshiarpur.
24. Partap Singh S/O Lal Singh, V. Chhabilpur, Tehsil and District Sialkot.
25. Mughsha Singh S/O Bela Singh, V. Johal, Tehsil and District Jullundur.
26. Gurdit Singh S/O Puran Singh, V. Dlipur Gudda, Tehsil Patti, District Amritsar (1933).
27. Karam Singh S/O Duni Singh, V. Jhingar, Tehsil Nawanshehar, District Jullundur (8.4.1938).



28. Banta Singh S/O Isher Singh, V. Alowal, Tehsil Tarntaran, District Amritsar.
29. Munsha Singh S/O Jhanda Singh, V. Samrabwah, Tehsil Phillaur, District Jullundur.
30. Surain Singh, V. Kangsai, (Hoshiarpur).

(H) The list of those who were executed in various cases of murders committed to avenge the Babbar murders and honour:

31. Bachan Singh, V. Loha Khera, District Sangrur (1940-41).
32. Bachint Singh, V. Dhandoli, Tehsil Phagwara, District Kapurthala (1941).
33. Bhan Singh, V. Randhawa Masandan, Teh. and District Jullundur (16.5.1931).
34. Gurdit Singh S/O Mangal Singh, V. Mandhali, Tehsil Nawanshehar, District Jullundur (10.8.1938).
35. Kartar Singh, 'Kirti', S/O Harnam Singh, V. Chak Kalan, Tehsil Nakodar, District Jullundur (10.8.1938).
36. Labh Singh, V. Randhawa, Masandan, Tehsil and District Jullundur (16.5.1931).
37. Badhu Singh S/O Tappa Singh, V. Sandhara, Tehsil and District Hoshiarpur (16.5.1931).
38. Udham Singh S/O Tehal Singh, Sumam Singh (Sangrur) (31.7.1940).

(I) The following died in the judicial lock-up during trial:

39. Amar Singh S/O Sant Singh, V. Pindori Nijjaran, Tehsil and District Jullundur (1.12.1924).
40. Chatter Singh S/O Bhup Singh, V. Kandhola, Tehsil and District Jullundur (21.12.1923).
41. Sunder Singh S/O Sobha Singh, V. Hayatpur, Tehsil Balachaur, District Hoshiarpur (13.12.1923).
42. Waryam Singh S/O Narain Singh, V. Kot Fatuhi, Tehsil Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur (29.12.1924).
43. Dhanna Singh, V. Khaira Majjah, District Kapurthala (1925)

44. Sadha Singh S/O Marain Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaran,  
Tehsil and District Jullundur (29.12.1924).

(J) The following met their heroic end in the police encounters:

45. Ajaib Singh, V. Dakha, Tehsil Jagraon,  
District Ludhiana.
46. Battan Singh, S/O Jawahar Singh, V. Rakkar,  
Tehsil Balachaur, District Hoshiarpur (15.7.1932).
47. Ujjagar Singh S/O Bhan Singh, V. Dhamian,  
Tehsil and District Hoshiarpur (1942).

(K) The following were sentenced to death in the Kiratpur murder case:-

48. Shansher Singh, V. Moranwali, Tehsil Garhshankar,  
District Hoshiarpur.
49. Harbans Singh S/O Khem Singh, V. Sirhala Khurad,  
Tehsil Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur. (3.4.1944).

Miscellaneous

50. Rand Singh S/O Surjan Singh, V.Dhariwal,  
Tehsil and District Kapurthala (1924).

A List of Ex-Soldiers as well as Active Soldiers  
who participated in the Babbar Akali Movement

Sr. No.	Name and Address	Regiment No.
1	Amar Singh s/o Natha Singh, V.Dhaliwal(Kapurthala)	I.S.Troop pensioner
2	Amar Singh s/o Basant Singh, V.Rajoual(Hoshiarpur)	35
3	Banta Singh s/o Jaimal Singh, V.Behbalpur (Hoshiarpur)	12
4	Battan Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V. Ganeshpur(Hoshiarpur)	35
5	Basant Singh s/o Chanda Singh, V.Nangal Kalan (Hoshiarpur)	2/24
6	Chattar Singh s/o Bhup Singh, V. Kandhola(Jullundur)	19
7	Chajja Singh s/o Mihaan Singh, V.Massanian(Jullundur)	29
8	Chajja Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V.Chanthu(Hoshiarpur)	25
9	Dalip Singh s/o Ishar Singh, V. Dhamian(Hoshiarpur)	51
10	Dhanna Singh s/o Nihal Singh, V. Sadhara(Hoshiarpur)	22 Panjabi
11	Dharam Singh s/o Sobha Singh, V. Hayat Singh (Hoshiarpur)	31 Lancern
12	Duman Singh s/o Munshi Singh, V.Pindori Mahatman (Hoshiarpur)	72
13	Ganga Singh s/o Hira Singh, V.Lihal (Gurdaspur)	52
14	Hari Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V. Jassowal(Hoshiarpur)	12
15	Harnam Singh s/o Ralla Singh, V.Garhi Panungoan (Hoshiarpur)	58
16	Kartar Singh s/o Surjan Singh, V. Gondpur(Hoshiarpur)	41
17	Kartar Singh s/o Achhru, V.Muzara Kanwan(Jullundur)	25 Sikh
18	Kishan Singh s/o Fateh Singh, V. Birring(Jullundur)	2/35 Sikh
19	Labh Singh s/o Suba Singh, V.Jassowal(Hoshiarpur)	Burma
20	Mann Singh s/o Hira Singh, V. Gobindpur(Gujjaraanwala)	52
21	Mohinder Singh s/o Labhu, V.Pindori Ganga Singh (Hoshiarpur)	47 Sikhs

contd..

## APPENDIX 11 contd:

22	Munsha Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Johal (Jullundur)	28
23	Narain Singh s/o Daseundha Singh, V.Chettiwind(Amritsar)	35 Sikhs
24	Partap Singh s/o Lal Singh, V.Chhabilpur(Sialkot)	52
25	Ram Singh s/o Lalu, V.Muzara Kanwan(Jullundur)	25 Sikhs
26	Santa Singh s/o Suba Singh, V.Chhoti Herion(Luchiana)	54
27	Sunder Singh s/o Sobha Singh, V. Hayatpur(Hoshiarpur)	32
28	Surjan Singh s/o Hamir Singh, V. Hayatpur (Hoshiarpur)	32
29	Surjan Singh s/o Suchet Singh, V. Domeli (Kapurthala)	41
30	Sardul Singh s/o Partap Singh, V.Burro Barrian(Hoshiarpur)	29
31	Thakur Singh s/o Gurmukh Singh, V.Rajowal(Hoshiarpur)	35
32	Thakar Singh s/o Mayya Singh, V.Bharta(Hoshiarpur)	2/35 Sikhs
33	Udham Singh s/o Gurdit Singh, V.Jandu Singha(Jullundur)	22
34	Udham Singh s/o Baisakha Singh, V.Kaulgarh(Hoshiarpur)	22
35	Ujjagar Singh s/o Partap Singh, V. Bisraampur(Jullundur)	19
36	Waryam Singh s/o Bhagwana , V.Muzara Kanwan(Jullundur)	25

The following approvers were also ex-soldiers:

1.	Amar Singh s/o Ganda Singh, V.Kot Barre Khan (Gujjaraowala)	35 Sikhs
2	Anup Singh s/ Inder Singh, V.Manko(Jullundur)	2/19
3	Assa Singh s/o Ram Ditta, V.Phakrudi(Jullundur)	
4	Banta Singh s/o Ghaneya Singh, V.Bopa Rai (Kapurthala)	Artillery 25 Panjabi
5.	Battan Singh s/o Harnam Singh, V.Pindori Nijjaren (Jullundur)	35 Sikhs
6	Chanda Singh s/o Chhaja Singh, V.Domeli(Kapurthala)	22
7.	Dhanna Singh s/o Hakam Singh,V.Kotli Bawa Dass	47 Sikhs

## APPENDIX 11 contd:

8	Hazara Singh (elder) s/o Inder Singh, V.Munder(Jullundur)	19
9	Hazara Singh (younger) s/o Ishar Singh, V.Munder (Jullundur)	22
10	Jawand Singh s/o Bela Singh, V. Johal (Jullundur)	36
11	Kirpal Singh s/o Ramn Singh, V. Malakpur(Rawalpindi)	52
12	Maluk Singh s/o Natha Singh, V.Plahi (Kapurthala)	39
13	Mit Singh s/o Kharak Singh, V.Kishanpura (Jullundur)	29
14	Ram Singh s/o Bhagwana, V. Muzara Kanwan or Kalan or Babbaran(Jullundur)	90

Miscellaneous

1.	Ajaib Singh, V. Dakha (Ludhiana)	Kapurthala army
2.	Bachint Singh, V. Dhandoli (Kapurthala)	Kapurthala army
3.	Bawa Singh s/o Ganeheya Singh, V. V. Tajawal (Kapurthala)	30th Sikh regiment.
4.	Gurdit Singh s/o Mangal Singh, V.Mandhiali (Jullundur)	2/22
5.	Karam Singh s/o Mela Singh, V.Mahal Baltoha (Hoshiarpur)	
6.	Banta Singh s/o Dewa Singh, V. Dhadiwal (Hoshiarpur).	
7.	Battan Singh s/o Faqiria, V.Bachhauri(Hoshiarpur).	
8.	Isher Singh s/o Kharak Singh, V. Sarangwal(Hoshiarpur).	

- - - - -

1	Arjan Singh, V. Dholanwala (Hoshiarpur).
2.	Labh Singh, V. Aklota (Una).
3.	Sadhu Singh, V. Manak Dheri (Jullundur).

APPENDIX 12

A Letter of Jathedar Kishan Singh Gargai  
Published in the Gargai Akali

ਰਕੜੀਸ      ਖ ਕਾਲੀ

ਨੰ: 98 ਸੋਮਵਾਰ

ਸਾਵਣ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ

31 ਜੁਲਾਈ , 1922

ਪੰਨਾ : 3

ਚਕਰਵਰਤੀਰਕੜੀਸਖੇਲਾਨ

(ਮੈਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਖਸੂਲਾ ਦਾ ਪਾਬੰਦ ਹਾਂ)

ਮੈਂ ਪਰਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਵਦੇਸ਼ੀ ਵੇਰਾ ਦੇ ਗਿਅਤ ਹਿੰਤ ਸੰਸ਼ੋਪਤ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ਼ ਚਾਲਾ ਚਲਦੀ ਆਈ ਹੈ , ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਹੋਛ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਪਿਨਸਨ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਆਇਆ ਸਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਯਾਲ ਕਾਰਗਸ , ਸਿੱਖ ਲੋਕ ਆਦਿ ਕਾਇਦਿਆਂ ਖਸੂਲਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਸਨ ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਖਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਟਲੀ ਬੁਟੇ ਜਾਣ ਪਰ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਤ ਪੰਝ ਪੰ ਰਈ ਆਤੇ ਉਹ ਆਜਰੇ ਬੰਡ ਸੋਚਣ ਲੱਗੇ , ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਮੇਨੂੰ ਮੁਲਕੀ ਤੇ ਪੰਝਕ ਸੇਵਾ ਦੇ ਮੇਦਾਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਾਭ ਕੇਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ । ਚੂੰਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਖਸੂਲਾ ਸਨ , ਵਾਰੰਟ ਕੋਟਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਚੰਗ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਲੱਗਾ । ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ 23 ਮਈ 1921 ਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਪਿਸਤੋਲਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਾਹੋਰ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਉਤੇ ਗਿਲਤਾਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਏ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਵਾਰੰਟ ਦਾ ਚੰਗ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਨੇ ਲੱਭ ਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਵਾਰੰਟ ਉਸ ਦਵਾ ਹੇਠ ਕੋਟੇ ਗਏ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਮੇਨੂੰ ਕਦੀ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਖਿਯਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਆਇਆ । ਉਕਤ ਦਵਾ ਨੇ ਮੇਨੂੰ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਕੇਤਾ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਝੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਜੂਲਮ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਜਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਖੰਡ ਨਾ ਖੁਹਾਵਾਂ , ਚਕਰਵਰਤੀ (ਫਕਾਰ) ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਆਜੇ ਪੰਝ ਆਰ ਮੁਲਕ ਵਿਚ ਮੇਰਾ ਭਾਈ ਰਸੂਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਆਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਰੂਪਰ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਕੋਈ ਖੋਜੀ ਵੱਧੀ ਕਦਰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ । ਮੈਂ ਚਕਰਵਰਤੀ ਦੇਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਨੈਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਆਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਝ ਆਤੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਵਿਚ



ਵਿਚ ਰਸੂਖ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ । ਮੇਰੀ ਵੱਧਦੀ ਇੰਚਰ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਤੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਸੁਖਾਈ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਈ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਭੁੱਟੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦਾਏ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਿਦਿਆ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਘਸ਼ਾਮਈ ਹਨ , ਯਾਦਿ ।

ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਸਮੂਹ ਦੇਸ਼ ਹਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿੰਦਤ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਯਜ਼ ਕੋਲ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਭਾਕੇ ਮਾਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਚਿੰਮੇ ਘਟਾਈਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਕਨ ਦਾ ਜਰਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ । ਕਈ ਥਾਂ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਦੇ ਘਾਟਮੀ ਭਾਕੇ ਚੋਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਪਕੜੀ ਵੀ ਜਾ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ । ਹੁਣ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਮੰਨੂੰ ਬਦਲਾਮ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਜੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਧਰੇ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਭਾਕ ਮਾਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਚਿੰਮੇ ਲਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਘਟਨ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ।

ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਯਜ਼ ਰਖਰੇ ਕੋਮ ਸ਼੍ਰੀਮਾਨ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਮੋਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਘਟਾਈ ਫਿਰਤਾਰ ਹਨ ਘਤੇ ਘਾਪ ਉੱਤੇ ਫਰਦੀ ਘਟਾਈ ਸਾਬਜ਼ ਲੇਖਾ ਦਰਾ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਨੇ ਵਾਪਸ ਲੈ ਲਈਆਂ ਹਨ ਜੇ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਦੇ ਭੁੱਟੇ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਰਵਾਹੀ ਦੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਪਰ ਲਾਈਆਂ ਰਈਆਂ ਸਨ । ਉਕਤ ਦਰਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਉਪਰ ਵੀ ਲਾਈਆਂ ਰਈਆਂ ਸਨ , ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਪਿਸ ਲਈਆਂ ਪੇਟ ਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਜੀ ਉਤੇ ਕੇਸ ਬਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ , ਇਸ ਲਈ ਨੇਕਰਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਜੇਹਲੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਫਰਜੀ ਦਰਾ ਲਾਉਣੇ ਚਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਜਿਹਲ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਉਤੇ ਕੇਸ ਬਣ ਸਕੇ ।

ਭਾਕੇ ਮਾਰਨੇ , ਖੂਨ ਖਰਾਬੇ ਕਰਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਘਤੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਘਸੂਲਾ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਹਨ । ਮੈਂ ਕੋਮੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਬਦਲੇ ਫੌਜੀ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ , ਪੁਰੋਤੇ ਯਾਦਿ ਦੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਘਤੇ ਬਾਲ ਬੱਚੇ ਤੇ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਸਮੂਹ ਵਿਭੂਤੀ ਇਥਥਾ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਦੇ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਘਾਇਆ ਹਾ ਘਜਰਾ ਕਰਲਾ ਮੇਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੈ ।

ਦੇਸ਼ ਘਤੇ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਘਧਮ ਸੇਵਕ

ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਜੌਜ, ਚਕਰਵਰਤੀ ।

Declaration No.494 of the Shiromani Gurdwara  
Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, dated 24th April, 1923.

ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਸਲਾਹ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਨਵੰਬਰ (1922) ਵਿਚ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਘਰਾਣੇ ਦਲ ਵਲੋਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਜਨਤਾ ਤੇ ਘਰਾਣੀ ਜੰਝਣਾਂ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਕ ਖੇਤਾਨ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ , ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਬਰ ਘਰਾਣੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਇਕ ਵੰਡੇ ਰਈ 'ਬੰਬਰ ਘਰਾਣੇ' ਨਾਮੀ ਦੁਵਰਕੇ ਦਾ ਦਿਕਰ ਸੀ , ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਕਿ ਕੌਮੀ ਤੇ ਪੰਥਕ ਮਸਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੱਲ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਤਸੱਦਦ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ । ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਖੇਤਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੰਬੀਹ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਸੀ ।

ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਘਾਟਰਸ਼ਕ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਦਾ ਨਮੂਨਾ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ , ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਸ਼ਚਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੋਏ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਿਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਸੱਦਦ ਦਾ ਬੀਜ ਕਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੀਜਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ । ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਸ਼ਟ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਰ ਬਾਰ ਦੁਹਰਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਪਰ ਸਚਿਆਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਛੁਪ ਸਕਦੀ । ਪਰ ਜਿਸ ਥਾਂ ਕਈ ਉਨਝਟਾਂ ਹੋਣ , ਉਥੇ ਕੇਵਲ ਸੁਚੇਤ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਹੀ ਕਾਫੀ ਨਹੀਂ । 'ਬੰਬਰ ਘਰਾਣੇ' ਨਾਮੀ ਦੁਵਰਕੇ ਤੇ ਇਸੇ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਹੋਰ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਵੰਡਣ ਪਰ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਚਰਚੀ ਸਮਝਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਵੇਰ ਜਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰ ਖਬਰਦਾਰ ਕਰੇ । ਇਹੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੰਡਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ : ਇਕ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਘਾਟਮੀ ਆੜੇ ਇਕਾਏ ਤੇ ਮੰਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਮਰਾਹ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਤਸੱਦਦ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਣ , ਜੋ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਤਬਾਹੀ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੈ ।

ਅਜਿਹੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਇਕੋ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਧੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਿਖੇਧੀ ਕਰੋ।

" ਦੂਜੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੁਝ ਸੰਜੋਦਾ ਘਾਟਮੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਘਾਪਟੇ ਭਰਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਗਾਤਾਰ ਭੁਨਮ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਵੇਖਕੇ , ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਲਹਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਚਲਿਆ ਘਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਮਾਰ ਕੁਟਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ , ਤੇ ਘਟਕ

ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਇਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਰਦੋਸ਼ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਹੋ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ , ਜਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਨਿਰਦੋਸ਼ੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ , ਉਸਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ (ਬਖਸ਼) ਨੇ ਰਸ਼ੋਦਰ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਵੇ ।

ਜੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਢੰਗ ਤੇ ਉੱਚੇ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਨੇ , ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਬਰ ਦਾ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਭਰ ਚੁਕਾ ਸੀ , ਕੁਝ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਰੱਖਦੀ ਹੈ । ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੁਸ਼ੱਬਤਾ ਅਸਹਿ ਹੈ ਜਾਣ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਬਰ ਨਾਲ ਸਹਿਣਾ ਵੱਡੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ।

ਇਹ ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਸਮੁੱਚਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਕਤ ਮਨ , ਬਚਨ , ਕਰਮ ਕਰਕੇ , ਰੂਪਤ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਟ , ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਰਿਹਾ ਜਾਵੇ । ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਬੜੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁੱਲਬ ਭਰਾਵਾਂ ਪਾਸ ਬੈਠਦੀ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸਬਰ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਨੂੰ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾ ਨਾਲ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨ , ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕਿ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਵਾਇਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ ।"

A copy of the resolution of the Shiromani Gurdwara  
Parbandhak Committee

(May 29-30, 1923)

ਨਕਲ ਕਾਰਵਾਈਆਂ

ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਮੇਟੀ

(ਜਨਰਲ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬੰਮੁਤਸਰ 1922-1939)

(ਨਕਲਕਾਰ ਹਲਕੀਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੇਵਕ)

ਸਿਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਖੋਜ ਵਿਭਾਗ , ਖਾਲਸਾ ਕਾਲਜ , ਬੰਮੁਤਸਰ

ਰਜਿਸਟਰ ਨੰ: 3

ਗੁਰਮਤਾ ਨੰ: 7

ਦੁਆਬੇ ਦੇ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਦਸ਼ਾ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਜਮਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮਤਾ ਪੇਸ਼  
ਕੀਤਾ ਜੋ ਸਚਬ ਸੀਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਾਸ ਹੋਇਆ:

ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਪਾਸ ਪੇਦਰ ਪੈ ਖਬਰਾਂ ਪੁੱਜ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਦੁਆਬੇ ਦੇ  
ਕਤਲਾਂ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕਈ ਹੋਏਸ਼ ਖ਼ਬਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਰ 107, 109, 110 ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਇਰਾਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਡਿਕਿਆ ।  
ਜਾਂ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਤਹਿਕੀਕ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਰਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਸ਼ੌਕ ਦੇ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ  
ਕੌਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿ ਕਈ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਖ਼ਬਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੀ ਪਕੜਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੁਣੇ ਹੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਬਾਰ  
ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕੇਦਾਂ ਹੋਂ ਛੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਆਏ ਹਨ । ਜੋ ਕਾਰਕਸ ਰਿਪੋਰਟਰ ਤਹਿਕੀਕਤ ਕਰਨ ਨਲੇ ਕਦੇ ਸਠ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ  
ਨੂੰ ਤੀ ਕਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਰਿਖਾ ਹੈ । ਇਸ ਨਲੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਬੜੇ ਚਿੰਤਾਤੁਰ  
ਹੋ ਕੇ ਬੜੇ ਚੇਬਥ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਇਕ ਤਹਿਕੀਕਤ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਇਸ ਕੌਲ ਦੇ ਖੋਜ ਨਲੇ ਬਾਪਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ  
ਦੁਆਬੇ ਦੇ ਆ ਕਰਿਫਤਾਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੁਧਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਖ਼ਬਰੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਕੁਰਲਣ ਨਾਲ ਕੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਹੈ।

ਨਾਲ ਹੋ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਪਸ਼ੁਟ ਕਰ ਦੇਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਮੇਟੀ  
ਸਾਤਮਈ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਕਤਲ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਤੋਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਥ ਨਲੇ ਸਖਰ ਹਾਨੀਕਾਰਕ ਸਮਝਦੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ  
ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਖ਼ਬਰੀ ਜਥਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੜੇ ਹੋਰ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਣਾ  
ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਤਾਣ ਇਸ ਕੌਲ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਲਾਣ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਰਤਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਪਾਸੋਂ  
ਬਿਨਕੁਲ ਥੋੜ ਰੱਖਣ ਤੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਨਾ ਦੇਣ ।

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